



AESOP'S FABLES



ILLUSTRATED
BY ERNEST GRISSET



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ÆSOP'S FABLES.

ILLUSTRATED BY

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THE OWL AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

[See Page 197.]

ÆSOP'S FABLES

ILLUSTRATED BY

ERNEST GRISET.

WITH TEXT BASED CHIEFLY UPON

CROXALL, LA FONTAINE, AND L'ESTRANGE.

REVISED AND RE-WRITTEN BY

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

" 'Twas the Golden Age, when every brute
Had voice articulate, in speech was skilled,
And the mid-forests with its synods filled.
The tongues of rock and pine-leaf then were free ;
To ship and sailor then would speak the sea ;
Sparrows with farmers would shrewd talk maintain ;
Earth gave all fruits, nor asked for toil again.
Mortals and gods were wont to mix as friends.
To which conclusion all the teaching tends
Of sage old Æsop."

BABRIUS. *Proem I.*

IT is probable that Fables which have passed current under the name of Æsop for two thousand years, will continue to bear his name as long as fables shall retain their power to instruct and charm—in other words, as long as men remain in need of instruction and reproof, and are impatient of their reception. Truth, however, calls for the assertion, that the connection of Æsop with the collection known by his name is very slight. Nearly all that can be said with certainty is, "that there is abundant proof that fables passing under the name of Æsop were current and popular in Athens during the most brilliant period of its literary history, and not much more than a century after the death of the supposed author." We are further told, on good authority, that of Æsop's works, "none are extant, and of his life scarcely anything is known."

What is known of the life of Æsop is briefly this:—He was

disfigured by unnecessary licence of expression, and now obsolete idiom. The second contains much quaint humour, but the Fables are of unequal merit, and at times are lengthy and somewhat wearisome.

In revising these editions to suit modern tastes and current modes of expression, no principle has been followed save that of trying to exhibit each Fable in its liveliest and most attractive dress. To this end, in some cases, almost the exact words of Croxall and L'Estrange are given; in others, the versions of these authors have been added to, altered, or curtailed; while in not a few the dress is almost, if not altogether, new.

J. B. R.



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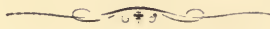
THE
FABLES OF ÆSOP.

THE TWO FROGS.

ONE hot summer, the lake in which two Frogs lived was completely dried up, and they were obliged to set off in search of water elsewhere. Coming to a deep and deliciously cool well, one of the Frogs proposed that they should jump in at once. "Wait a bit," cried the other; "if that should dry up, how could we get out again?"

JUPITER AND THE CAMEL.

THE Camel once upon a time complained to Jupiter that he was not as well served as he ought to be in the means of defence and offence. "The bull," said he, "has horns, the boar, tusks, and the lion and tiger, formidable claws and fangs that make them feared and respected on all sides. I, on the other hand, have to put up with the abuse of all who choose to insult me." Jupiter angrily told him that if he would take the trouble to think, he would see that he was endowed with qualities shared by no other beast; but that, as a punishment for his unreasonable importunity, henceforward his ears should be shortened.



THE LION HUNTING WITH OTHER BEASTS.

A LION, a Heifer, a Goat, and a Sheep once agreed to share whatever each might catch in hunting. A fine fat stag fell into a snare set by the Goat, who thereupon called the rest together. The Lion divided the stag into four parts. Taking the best piece for himself, he said, "This is mine of course, as I am the Lion;" taking another portion, he added, "This too is mine by right—the right, if you must know, of the strongest." Further, putting aside the third piece, "That's for the most valiant," said he; "and as for the remaining part, touch it if you dare."

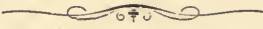
THE STAG LOOKING INTO THE POOL.

A STAG drinking at a clear pool, admired the handsome look of his spreading antlers, but was much displeased at the slim and ungainly appearance of his legs. "What a glorious pair of branching horns!" said he. "How gracefully they hang over my forehead! What an agreeable air they give my face! But as for my spindle-shanks of legs, I am heartily ashamed of them." The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when he saw some huntsmen and a pack of hounds making towards him. His despised legs soon placed him at a distance from his followers, but, on entering the forest, his horns got entangled at every turn, so that the dogs soon reached him and made an end of him. "Mistaken fool that I was!" he exclaimed; "had it not been for these wretched horns my legs would have saved my life."



THE COCK AND THE JEWEL.

A BRISK young Cock scratching for something with which to entertain his favourite hens, happened to turn up a jewel. Feeling quite sure that it was something precious, but not knowing well what to do with it, he addressed it with an air of affected wisdom as follows:—"You are a very fine thing, no doubt, but you are not at all to my taste. For my part, I would rather have one grain of dear delicious barley than all the jewels in the world."



THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A HUNGRY Wolf one day saw a Lamb drinking at a stream, and wished to frame some plausible excuse for making him his prey. "What do you mean by muddling the water I am going to drink?" fiercely said he to the Lamb. "Pray forgive me," meekly answered the Lamb; "I should be sorry in any way to displease you, but as the stream runs from you towards me, you will see that such cannot be the case." "That's all very well," said the Wolf; "but you know you spoke ill of me behind my back a year ago." "Nay, believe me," replied the Lamb, "I was not then born." "It must have been your brother then," growled the Wolf. "It cannot have been, for I never had any," answered the Lamb. "I know it was one of your lot," rejoined the Wolf, "so make no more such idle excuses." He then seized the poor Lamb, carried him off to the woods, and ate him.



THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

THE PEACOCK'S COMPLAINT.

THE Peacock complained to Juno that while every one laughed at his voice, an insignificant creature like the Nightingale had a note that delighted everybody. Juno, angry at the unreasonableness of her favourite bird, scolded him in the following terms: "Envious bird that you are, I am sure you have no cause to complain. On your neck shine all the colours of the rainbow, and your extended tail shows like a mass of gems. No living being has every good thing to its own share. The falcon is endowed with swiftness, the eagle, strength, the parrot, speech, the raven, the gift of augury, and the nightingale with a melodious note, while you have both size and beauty. Cease then to complain, or the gifts you have shall be taken away."



THE CAT AND THE MICE.

A CERTAIN house was much infested by Mice; the owner brought home a Cat, a famous mouser, who soon made such havoc among the little folk, that those who remained resolved they would never leave the upper shelves. The Cat grew hungry and thin in consequence, and, driven to

her wit's end, hung by her hind legs to a peg in the wall, and pretended to be dead. An old Mouse came to the edge of the shelf, and, seeing through the deception, cried out, "Ah, ah, Mrs. Pussy! We should not come near you, even if your skin were stuffed with straw."





THE DOG AND HIS SHADOW.

A Dog, bearing in his mouth a piece of meat that he had stolen, was crossing a smooth stream by means of a plank. Looking in, he saw what he took to be another dog carrying another piece of meat. Snapping greedily to get this as well, he let go the meat that he had, and lost it in the stream.

THE ANT AND THE FLY.

AN Ant and a Fly one day disputed as to their respective merits. "Vile creeping insect!" said the Fly to the Ant, "can you for a moment compare yourself with me? I soar on the wing like a bird. I enter the palaces of kings, and alight on the heads of princes, nay, of emperors,

and only quit them to adorn the yet more attractive brow of beauty. Besides, I visit the altars of the gods. Not a sacrifice is offered but is first tasted by me. Every feast, too, is open to me. I eat and drink of the best, instead of living for days on two or three grains of corn as you do." "All that's very fine," replied the Ant; "but listen to me. You boast of your feasting, but you know that your diet is not always so choice, and you are sometimes forced to eat what nothing should induce me to touch. As for alighting on the heads of kings and emperors, you know very well that whether you pitch on the head of an emperor, or of an ass (and it is as often on the one as the other), you are shaken off from both with impatience. And, then, the 'altars of the gods,' indeed! There and everywhere else you are looked upon as nothing but a nuisance. In the winter, too, while I feed at my ease on the fruit of my toil, what more common than to see your friends dying with cold, hunger, and fatigue? I lose my time now in talking to you. Chattering will fill neither my bin nor my cupboard."



THE STAG IN THE OX-STALL.

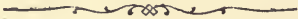
A STAG, hard pressed by the hounds, ran for shelter into an ox-stall, the door of which was open. One of the Oxen turned round, and asked him why he came to such a place as that, where he would be sure to be taken. The Stag replied that he should do well enough if the Oxen

would not tell of him, and, covering himself in a heap of straw, waited for the night. Several servants, and even the Farm-Bailiff himself, came and looked round, but saw nothing of the Stag, who, as each went away, was ready to jump out of his skin for joy, and warmly thanked the Oxen for their silence. The Ox who had spoken first to him warned him not to be too sure of his escape, and said that glad as they would all be for him to get away, there was a certain person still to come whose eyes were a deal sharper than the eyes of any one who had been there yet. This was the Master himself, who, having been dining with a neighbour, looked in on his way home to see that all was right. At a glance he saw the tips of the horns coming through the straw, whereupon he raised a hue and cry, called all his people together, and made a prize of the Stag.



THE FROG WHO WISHED TO BE AS BIG AS AN OX.

AN Ox grazing in a meadow, chanced to set his foot on a young Frog and crushed him to death. His brothers and sisters, who were playing near, at once ran to tell their mother what had happened. "The monster that did it, mother, was such a size!" said they. The mother, who was a vain old thing, thought that she could easily make herself as large. "Was it as big as this?" she asked, blowing and puffing herself out. "Oh, much bigger than that," replied the young Frogs. "As this then?" cried she, puffing and blowing again with all her might. "Nay, mother," said they; "if you were to try till you burst yourself, you would never be so big." The silly old Frog tried to puff herself out still more, and burst herself indeed.



THE HAWK AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A NIGHTINGALE once fell into the clutches of a hungry Hawk who had been all day on the look-out for food. "Pray let me go," said the Nightingale, "I am such a mite for a stomach like yours. I sing so nicely too. Do let me go, it will do you good to hear me." "Much good it will do to an empty belly," replied the Hawk, "and besides, a little bird that I have is more to me than a great one that has yet to be caught."



THE HAWK AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

THE BELLY AND THE MEMBERS.

THE Members of the Body once rebelled against the Belly, who, they said, led an idle, lazy life at their expense. The Hands declared that they would not again lift a crust even to keep him from starving, the Mouth that it would not take in a bit more food, the Legs that they would carry him about no longer, and so on with the others. The Belly quietly allowed them to follow their own courses, well knowing that they would all soon come to their senses, as indeed they did, when, for want of the blood and nourishment supplied from the stomach, they found themselves fast becoming mere skin and bone.

THE KITE AND THE PIGEONS.

A KITE that had kept sailing around a dove-cote for many days to no purpose, was forced by hunger to have recourse to stratagem. Approaching the Pigeons in his gentlest manner, he tried to show them how much better their state would be if they had a king with some firmness about him, and how well his protection would shield them from the attacks of the Hawk and other enemies. The Pigeons, deluded by this show of reason, admitted him to the dove-cote as their king. They found, however, that he thought it part of his kingly prerogative to eat one of their number every day, and they soon repented of their credulity in having let him in.

THE BALD KNIGHT.

A CERTAIN Knight, who wore a wig to conceal his baldness, was out hunting one day. A sudden gust of wind carried away his wig, and showed his bald pate. His friends all laughed heartily at the odd figure he made, but the old fellow, so far from being put out, laughed as heartily as any of them. "Is it any wonder," said he, "that another man's hair shouldn't keep on my head when my own wouldn't stay there?"

THE MAN AND THE LION.

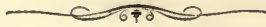
A MAN and a Lion once argued together as to which belonged to the nobler race. The former called the attention of the Lion to a monument on which was sculptured a Man striding over a vanquished Lion. "That proves nothing at all," said the Lion; "if a Lion had been the carver, he would have made the Lion striding over the Man,"





THE COUNTRYMAN AND THE SNAKE.

A VILLAGER, one frosty day in the depth of winter, found a Snake under a hedge almost dead with the cold. Having pity on the poor creature, he brought it home, and laid it on the hearth near the fire. Revived by the heat, it reared itself up, and with dreadful hissings flew at the wife and children of its benefactor. The man, hearing their cries, rushed in, and with a mattock, which he brought in his hand, soon cut the Snake in pieces. "Vile wretch!" said he; "is this the reward you make to him who saved your life? Die, as you deserve; but a single death is too good for you."



THE MAN AND HIS TWO WIVES.

IN a country where men could have more than one wife, a certain man, whose head was fast becoming white, had two, one a little older than himself, and one much younger. The young Wife, being of a gay and lively turn, did not want people to think that she had an old man for a husband, and so used to pull out as many of his white hairs as she could. The old Wife, on the other hand, did not wish to seem older than her husband, and so used to pull out the black hairs. This went on, until between them both, they made the poor man quite bald.

THE FROGS AND THE FIGHTING BULLS.

A FROG one day peeping out of a lake, saw two Bulls fighting at some distance off in the meadow. Calling to his companions, "My dear friends," said he, "whatever will become of us?" "Why, what are you frightened at?" asked one of the Frogs; "what can their quarrels have to do with us? They are only fighting which shall be master of the herd." "True," answered the first, "and it is just that which causes my fear, for the one that is beaten will take refuge here in the marshes, and will tread us to death." And so it happened; and many a Frog, in dying, had sore proof that the fears which he had thought to be groundless were not so in fact.

THE WIND AND THE SUN.

A DISPUTE once arose between the North Wind and the Sun as to which was the stronger of the two. Seeing a traveller on his way, they agreed to try which could the sooner get his cloak off him. The North Wind began, and sent a furious blast, which, at the onset, nearly tore the cloak from its fastenings; but the traveller, seizing the garment with a firm grip, held it round his body so tightly that Boreas spent his remaining force in vain. The Sun, dispelling the clouds that had gathered, then darted his most sultry beams on the traveller's head. Growing faint with the heat, the man flung off his cloak, and ran for protection to the nearest shade.



THE MISCHIEVOUS DOG.

A CERTAIN man had a Dog which worried so many people, that he was obliged to fasten a heavy clog about his neck to stop him from such sport in future. This the stupid cur took to be a mark of honourable distinction, and grew so vain in consequence that he turned up his nose at all the dogs he met. A sly old fellow, however, assured him that so far from having any cause to be proud of his burden, it was, on the contrary, a sure sign of disgrace.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A LION, tired with the chase, lay sleeping at full length under a shady tree. Some Mice scrambling over him while he slept, awoke him. Laying his paw upon one of them, he was about to crush him, but the Mouse implored his mercy in such moving terms that he let him go. Some time after, the Lion was caught in a net laid by some hunters, and, unable to free himself, made the forest resound with his roars. The Mouse whose life had been spared came, and with his little sharp teeth soon gnawed the ropes asunder, and set the Lion free.



THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

THE FATAL COURTSHIP.

IT is said that the Mouse spoken of in the last Fable was so emboldened by the offers of friendship made to him by the Lion in return for his assistance, that he asked for the hand of his daughter in marriage. The Lion, amused at the request, good-humouredly told the Mouse he should plead his own cause, and called the young Lioness to come to him. She, bounding forward heedlessly, did not see her little lover, who was running to meet her, and one of her paws falling upon him, he was crushed to pieces.

THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

A CERTAIN man had two children, a boy and a girl. The lad was a handsome young fellow enough, but the girl was as plain as a girl can well be. The latter, provoked beyond endurance by the way in which her Brother looked in the glass and made remarks to her disadvantage, went to her father and complained of it. The father drew his children to him very tenderly, and said, "My dears, I wish you both to look in the glass every day. You, my son, that, seeing your face is handsome, you may take care not to spoil it by ill-temper and bad behaviour, and you, my daughter, that you may be encouraged to make up for your want of beauty by the sweetness of your manners, and the grace of your conversation."

THE BOASTING TRAVELLER.

A MAN was one day entertaining a lot of fellows in an ale-house with an account of the wonders he had done when abroad on his travels. "I was once at Rhodes," said he, "and the people of Rhodes, you know, are famous for jumping. Well, I took a jump there that no other man could come within a yard of. That's a fact, and if we were there I could bring you ten men who would prove it." "What need is there to go to Rhodes for witnesses?" asked one of his hearers; "just imagine that you are there now, and show us your leap."

THE SPENDTHRIFT AND THE SWALLOW.

A PRODIGAL young fellow, who had run through all his money, and even sold all his outer clothes except his cloak, seeing a Swallow skimming over the meadows one fine day in the early spring, believed that summer was really come, and sold his cloak too. The next morning there happened to be a severe frost, and, shivering and nearly frozen himself, he found the Swallow lying stiff and dead upon the ground. He thereupon upbraided the poor bird as the cause of all his misfortunes. "Stupid thing," said he, "had you not come before your time, I should not now be so wretched as I am."



THE LEOPARD AND THE FOX.

THE Leopard one day, in the hearing of the Fox, was very loud in the praise of his own beautifully spotted skin. The Fox thereupon told him that, handsome as he might be, he considered that he himself was yet a great deal handsomer. "Your beauty is of the body," said the Fox; "mine is of the mind."



THE WANTON CALF.

A CALF, full of play and wantonness, seeing an Ox at the plough, could not forbear insulting him. "What a sorry poor drudge are you," said he, "to bear that heavy yoke upon your neck, and with a plough at your tail all day,

to go turning up the ground for a master. You are a wretched poor slave, and know no better, or you would not do it. See what a happy life I lead; I go just where I please—sometimes in the cool shade, sometimes in the warm sunshine; and whenever I like I drink at the clear and running brook.” The Ox, not at all moved by this address, went on quietly and calmly with his work, and in the evening, when unyoked and going to take his rest, he saw the Calf, hung with garlands of flowers, being led off for sacrifice by the priests. He pitied him, but could not help saying, as he passed, “Now, friend, whose condition is the better, yours or mine?”

THE JACKDAW AND THE PIGEONS.

A JACKDAW seeing how well some Pigeons in a certain dove-cote fed, and how happily they lived together, wished much to join them. With this view he whitened his feathers, and slipped in one evening just as it was getting dark. As long as he kept quiet he escaped notice, but growing bolder by degrees, and feeling very jolly in his new quarters, he burst into a hearty laugh. His voice betrayed him. The Pigeons set upon him and drove him out. When he would afterwards have joined the Jackdaws again, his discoloured feathers and his battered state drew attention to him, and his former mates finding out what he had been at, would let him have no further part with them.

THE HARES AND THE FROGS.

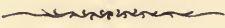
THE Hares once took serious counsel among themselves whether death itself would not be preferable to their miserable condition. "What a sad state is ours," they said, "never to eat in comfort, to sleep ever in fear, to be startled by a shadow, and fly with beating heart at the rustling of the leaves. Better death by far;" and off they went accordingly to drown themselves in a neighbouring lake. Some scores of Frogs who were enjoying the moonlight on the bank, scared at the approach of the Hares, jumped into the water. The splash awoke fresh fears in the breasts of the timid Hares, and they came to a full stop in their flight. One wise old fellow among them cried, "Hold, brothers! See, weak and fearful as we are, beings exist that are more weak and fearful still. Why then should we seek to die? Let us rather make the best of our lot, such as it is."

THE SICK KITE.

A KITE who had been ill for a long time, begged of his mother to go to all the temples in the country, and see what prayers and promises could do for his recovery. The old Kite replied, "My son, unless you can think of an altar that neither of us has robbed, I fear that nothing can be done for you in that way."

THE LION IN LOVE.

A LION fell in love with the fair daughter of a forester, and demanded her of her father in marriage. The man durst not refuse, though he would gladly have done so; but he told the Lion that his daughter was so young and delicate, that he could consent only upon condition that his teeth should first be drawn and his claws cut off. The Lion was so enslaved by love that he agreed to this without a murmur, and it was accordingly done. The forester then seized a club, laid him dead upon the spot and so broke off the match.



THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

A WOLF devoured his prey so ravenously that a bone stuck in his throat, giving him great pain. He ran howling up and down, and offered to reward handsomely any one who would pull it out. A Crane, moved by pity as well as by the prospect of the money, undertook the dangerous task. Having removed the bone, he asked for the promised reward. "Reward!" cried the Wolf; "pray, you greedy fellow, what reward can you possibly require? You have had your head in my mouth, and instead of biting it off, I have let you pull it out unharmed. Get away with you, and don't come again within reach of my paw."



THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

THE LION, THE ASS, AND THE FOX.

THE Lion, the Ass, and the Fox went hunting together, and it was agreed that whatever was taken should be shared between them. They caught a large fat Stag, which the Lion ordered the Ass to divide. The Ass took a deal of pains to divide the Stag into three pieces, which should be as nearly equal as possible. The Lion, enraged with him for what he considered a want of proper respect to his quality, flew upon him and tore him to pieces. He then called on the Fox to divide. The Fox, nibbling off a small portion for himself, left the rest for the Lion's share. The Lion, highly pleased with this mark of respect, asked the Fox where he had learned such politeness and good-breeding. "To tell the truth, Sire," replied the Fox, "I was taught it by the Ass that lies dead there."

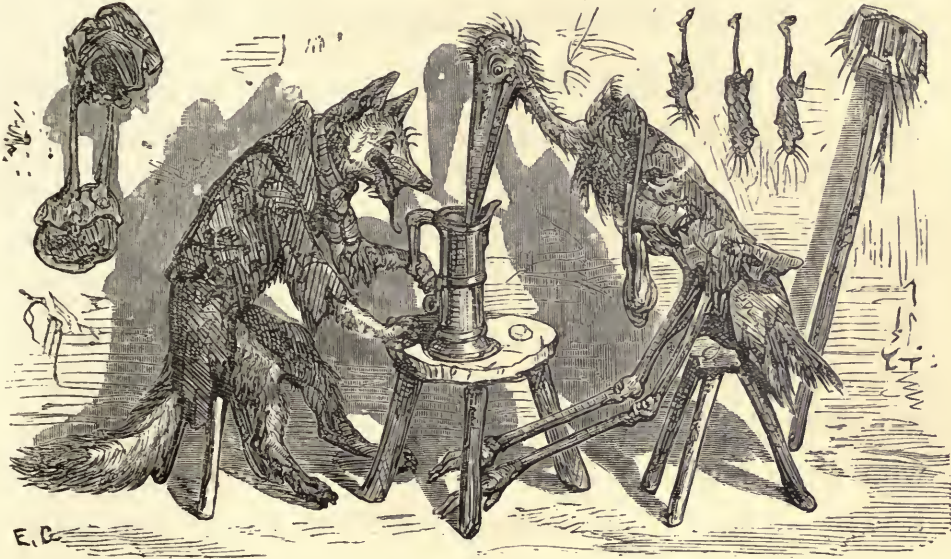
THE COLLIER AND THE FULLER.

A FRIENDLY Collier meeting one day with a Fuller, an old acquaintance of his, kindly invited him to come and share his house. "A thousand thanks for your civility," replied the Fuller; "but I am rather afraid that as fast as I make anything clean, you will be for smutting it again."

THE EAGLE, THE CAT, AND THE SOW.

AN Eagle had built her nest in the top branches of an old oak tree; a wild Cat dwelt in a hole about the middle; and in the hollow part at the bottom lived a Sow with a whole litter of pigs. They might have remained there long in contentment, but the Cat, bent upon mischief, crept up one day to the Eagle, and said, "Neighbour, have you noticed what the old Sow who lives below is doing? I believe she is determined upon nothing less than to root up this tree, our abode, and when it falls she will devour our young ones." This put the Eagle in a great fright, and she did not dare to stir from home lest the tree might fall in her absence. Descending to visit the Sow, the wily Cat said, "Listen to me, my friend. Last night I overheard that old bird who lives over our heads promise her young ones that the very next time you went out they should have one of your dear little porkers for supper." The Sow, greatly alarmed in her turn, durst not quit her hollow. The mutual fear of the Eagle and the Sow became so great that they and their young ones were actually starved to death, and fell a prey to the designing old Cat and her kittens.






THE FOX AND THE STORK.

A Fox one day invited a Stork to dine with him, and, wishing to be amused at his expense, put the soup which he had for dinner in a large flat dish, so that, while he himself could lap it up quite well, the Stork could only dip in the tips of his long bill. Some time after, the Stork, bearing his treatment in mind, invited the Fox to take dinner with him. He, in his turn, put some minced meat in a long and narrow-necked vessel, into which he could easily put his bill, while Master Fox was forced to be content with licking what ran down the sides of the vessel. The Fox then remembered his old trick, and could not but admit that the Stork had well paid him out.

THE LIONESS AND THE FOX.

THE Fox once observed to the Lioness that Foxes were very much to be envied in the matter of fruitfulness. Scarcely a year passed that she, for instance, did not bring into the world a good litter of cubs, while some people, she continued, who had only one young one at a time, and that not more than twice or thrice in their lives, looked down upon everybody else with contempt. This sneer was too pointed to be passed over in silence by the Lioness, who replied with a good deal of fire, "What you say is true; you have a great many young at a time, and often; but what are they? Foxes. I have but one, but remember that that one is a Lion."



THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

A Fox and a Goat once journeyed together. The Goat was a simple creature, seldom seeing beyond his own nose; while the Fox, like most of his kind, was a master of knavery. They were led by thirst to descend a deep well, and when they had both drunk freely, the Fox said, "Now, master Goat, what shall we do? Drinking is all very well, but it won't get us out from here. You had better rear up against the wall; then, by the aid of your horns, I can get out, and, once out, of course I can help you." "By my beard," said the Goat, "that's a good

plan. I should never have thought of that. How I wish I had your brains, to be sure!" The Fox, having got out in the way described, began to rail at his companion. "Make the most of your patience, old fellow," said he, "for you'll need it all. If you had had half as much brains as beard, you would never have gone down there. I am sorry that I can't stay longer with you, but I have some business that must be seen to. So, good-bye."

THE GENEROUS LION.

A LION having pulled down a Bullock, stood over it, lashing his sides with his tail. A Robber who was passing by stopped and impudently demanded half shares. "You are always too ready to take what does not belong to you," answered the Lion; "go your way, I have nothing to say to you." The Thief saw that the Lion was not to be trifled with, and went off. Just then a Traveller came up, and seeing the Lion, modestly and timorously withdrew. The generous beast, with a courteous, affable air, called him forward, and, dividing the Bullock in halves, told the man to take one, and in order that he might be under no restraint, carried his own portion away into the forest.

CÆSAR AND THE SLAVE.

DURING a visit that Tiberius Cæsar paid to one of his country residences, he observed that whenever he walked in the grounds, a certain Slave was always a little way ahead of him, busily watering the paths. Turn which way he would, go where he might, there was the fellow still fussing about with his watering-pot. He felt sure that he was making himself thus needlessly officious in the hope of thereby gaining his liberty. In making a Slave free, a part of the ceremony consisted in giving him a gentle stroke on one side of the face. Hence, when the man came running up in eager expectation, at the call of the Emperor, the latter said to him, "I have for a long time observed you meddling where you had nothing to do, and while you might have been better employed elsewhere. You are mistaken if you think I can afford a box on the ear at so low a price as you bid for it."

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE BEAR.

Two men about to journey through a forest, agreed to stand by one another in any dangers that might befall. They had not gone far before a savage Bear rushed out from a thicket and stood in their path. One of the Travellers, a light, nimble fellow, got up into a tree. The other fell flat on his face and held his breath. The Bear came up and smelled



THE TRAVELLERS AND THE BEAR.

at him, and taking him for dead, went off again into the wood. The man in the tree came down, and rejoining his companion, asked him, with a mischievous smile, what was the wonderful secret that the Bear had whispered into his ear. "Why," replied the other sulkily, "he told me to take care for the future and not to put any confidence in such cowardly rascals as you are."

THE SOW AND THE CAT.

A Sow and a Cat once talking together, the conversation turned upon the comparative largeness of their families. "I have as large families, and as often, as anybody," said the Cat with a conceited air. "Ay, ay," grunted the Sow, "that may be; but you are always in so much haste about it, that you bring your kittens into the world blind."

THE WOLF, THE FOX, AND THE APE.

THE Wolf charged the Fox, before the Ape as judge, with having stolen some meat which he had put by. The case was long and angrily contested, and the Ape, having heard all that was to be said on both sides, announced his decision as follows: "You, Master Wolf, in spite of your complaints, do not appear to me to have had anything to lose; but I am forced to admit that you, Master Fox, have certainly stolen what is laid to your charge."

THE BOY AND HIS MOTHER.

A LITTLE Boy, who went to school, stole one of his schoolfellow's books and took it home. His Mother, so far from correcting him, took the book and sold it, and gave him an apple for his pains. In the course of time the Boy became a robber, and at last was tried for his life and condemned. He was led to the gallows, a great crowd of people following, and among them his Mother, bitterly weeping. He prayed the officers to grant him the favour of a few parting words with her, and his request was freely granted. He approached his Mother, put his arm round her neck, and making as though he would whisper something in her ear, bit it-off. Her cry of pain drew everybody's eyes upon them, and great was the indignation that at such a time he should add another violence to his list of crimes. "Nay, good people," said he, "do not be deceived. My first theft was of a book, which I gave to my Mother. Had she whipped me for it, instead of praising me, I should not have come to the gallows now that I am a man."





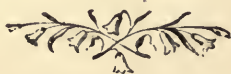
THE FOX AND THE SICK LION.

It was reported that the Lion was sick and confined to his den, where he would be happy to see any of his subjects who might come to pay the homage that was due to him. Many accordingly went in, but it was observed that the Fox very carefully kept away. The Lion noticed his absence, and sent one of his Jackals to express a hope that he would show he was not insensible to motives of respect and charity, by coming and paying his duty like the rest. The Fox told the Jackal to offer his sincerest reverence to his master, and to say that he had more than once been on the point of coming to see him, but he had in truth observed that all the foot-prints at the mouth of the cave pointed inwards, and none outwards, and not being

able to explain that fact to his satisfaction, he had taken the liberty of stopping away. The truth was that this illness of the Lion's was only a sham to induce the beasts to come to his den, that he might the more easily devour them.

THE ASS AND THE LITTLE DOG.

THE Ass observing how great a favourite a Little Dog was with his master, how much caressed and fondled, and fed with choice bits at every meal—and for no other reason, that he could see, but skipping and frisking about and wagging his tail—resolved to imitate him, and see whether the same behaviour would not bring him similar favours. Accordingly, the master was no sooner come home from walking, and seated in his easy-chair, than the Ass came into the room, and danced around him with many an awkward gambol. The man could not help laughing aloud at the odd sight. The joke, however, became serious when the Ass, rising on his hind-legs, laid his fore-feet upon his master's shoulders, and braying in his face in the most fascinating manner, would fain have jumped into his lap. The man cried out for help, and one of his servants running in with a good stick, laid it unmercifully on the bones of the poor Ass, who was glad to get back to his stable.



THE SHEEP-BITER.

A CERTAIN Shepherd had a Dog in whom he placed such great trust, that he would often leave the flock to his sole care. As soon, however, as his master's back was turned, the Cur, although well fed and kindly treated, used to worry the Sheep, and would sometimes kill one and devour a portion. The man at last found out how much his confidence had been abused, and resolved to hang the Dog without mercy. When the rope was put around his neck, he pleaded hard for his life, and begged his master rather to hang the Wolf, who had done ten times as much harm to the flock as he had. "That may be," replied the man sternly; "but you are ten times the greater villain for all that. Nothing shall save you from the fate which your treachery deserves."

THE EARTHEN POT AND THE POT OF BRASS.

A RIVER having overflowed its banks, two Pots were carried along in the stream, one made of Earthenware and the other of Brass. "Well, brother, since we share the same fate, let us go along together," cried the Brazen Pot to the Earthen one. "No, no!" replied the latter in a great fright; "keep off whatever you do, for if you knock against me, or I against you, it will be all over with me—to the bottom I shall go."

THE TORTOISE AND THE EAGLE.

A TORTOISE, weary of crawling about on the ground at a snail's pace, desired to fly in the air like the birds, and gave out that if any bird would take him up in the clouds and show him the world, he would tell him in return where to find treasures hid in the earth. The Eagle thereupon did as he wished, but finding that the Tortoise could not keep his word, carried him up once more, and let him fall on a hard rock, where he was dashed to pieces.

THE TWO CRABS.

"My dear," called out an old Crab to her daughter one day, "why do you sidle along in that awkward manner? Why don't you go forward like other people?" "Well, mother," answered the young Crab, "it seems to me that I go exactly like you do. Go first and show me how, and I will gladly follow."

THE FOX WITHOUT A TAIL.

A Fox was once caught in a trap by his tail, and in order to get away, was forced to leave it behind. Knowing that without a tail he would be a laughing-stock for all his fellows, he resolved to try to induce them to part with theirs. So at the next assembly of Foxes he made a speech



THE FOX WITHOUT A TAIL.

on the unprofitableness of tails in general, and the inconvenience of a Fox's tail in particular, adding that he had never felt so easy as since he had given up his own. When he had sat down, a sly old fellow rose, and waving his long brush with a graceful air, said, with a sneer, that if, like the last speaker, he had lost his tail, nothing further would have been needed to convince him ; but till such an accident should happen, he should certainly vote in favour of tails.

THE VIPER AND THE FILE.

A VIPER entered a smith's shop, and looked up and down for something to eat. He settled at last upon a File, and began to gnaw it greedily. "Bite away," said the File gruffly, "you'll get little from me. It is my business to take from all and give to none."

THE FOX AND THE BRAMBLE.

A Fox, hotly pursued by the Hounds, jumped through a hedge, and his feet were sadly torn by a Bramble that grew in the midst. He fell to licking his paws, with many a curse against the Bramble for its unkind treatment. "Softly, softly, good words if you please, Master Reynard," said the Bramble. "I thought you knew better than to lay hold of one whose nature it is to lay hold of others."

FORTUNE AND THE BOY.

A LITTLE Boy quite tired out with play, stretched out, and fell sound asleep close to the edge of a deep well. Fortune came by, and gently waking him said, "My dear Boy, believe me, I have saved your life. If you had fallen in, everybody would have laid the blame on me; but tell me truly, now, would the fault have been yours or mine?"

THE MAN AND HIS GOOSE.

A CERTAIN Man had a Goose that laid him a golden egg every day. Being of a covetous turn, he thought if he killed his Goose he should come at once at the source of his treasure. So he killed her, and cut her open, and great was his dismay to find that her inside was in no way different to that of any other Goose.





THE PEACOCK AND THE CRANE.

THE Peacock, spreading his gorgeous tail, stalked up and down in his most stately manner before a Crane, and ridiculed him for the plainness of his plumage. "Tut, tut!" said the Crane; "which is the better now, to strut about in the dirt, and be gazed at by children, or to soar above the clouds, as I do?"

THE BULL AND THE GOAT.

A BULL being pursued by a Lion, spied a cave, and flew towards it, meaning to take shelter there. A Goat came to the mouth of the cave, and menacing the Bull with his horns, disputed the passage. The Bull, having no

time to lose, was obliged to make off again without delay, but not before saying to the Goat, "Were it not for the Lion that is behind me, I would soon let you know the difference between a Bull and a Goat."

A MAN BITTEN BY A DOG.

A MAN who had been sadly bitten by a Dog, was advised by an old woman as a cure to rub a piece of bread on the wound, and give it to the Dog that had bitten him. He did so, and Æsop, passing by at the time, asked him what he was about. The Man told him, and Æsop replied, "I am glad you do it privately, for if the rest of the Dogs of the town were to see you, we should be eaten up alive."

THE STAG AND THE FAWN.

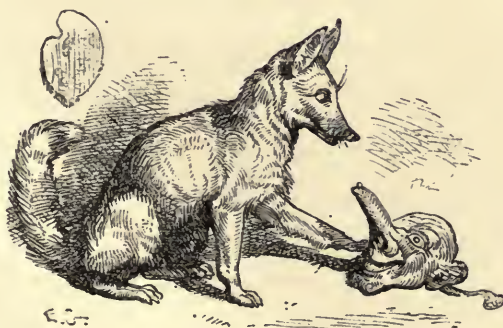
A FAWN once said to a Stag, "How is it that you, who are so much bigger, and stronger, and fleetier than a Dog, are in such a fright when you behold one? If you stood your ground, and used your horns, I should think the Hounds would fly from you." "I have said that to myself, little one, over and over again," replied the Stag, "and made up my mind to act upon it; but yet, no sooner do I hear the voice of a Dog than I am ready to jump out of my skin."

THE ASS, THE LION, AND THE COCK

AN Ass and a Cock feeding in the same meadow, were one day surprised by a Lion. The Cock crowed loudly, and the Lion (who is said to have a great antipathy to the crowing of a Cock) at once turned tail and ran off again. The Ass, believing that it was from fear of him that the Lion fled, pursued him. As soon as they were out of hearing of the Cock, the Lion turned round upon the Ass and tore him in pieces.

THE FOX AND THE MASK.

A Fox was one day rummaging in the house of an actor, and came across a very beautiful Mask. Putting his paw on the forehead, he said, "What a handsome face we have here! Pity it is that it should want brains."



DEATH AND CUPID.

CUPID, one sultry summer's noon, tired with play and faint with heat, went into a cool grotto to repose himself. This happened to be the cave of Death. He threw himself carelessly down upon the floor, and his quiver turning upside down, all the arrows fell out, and mingled with those of Death, which lay scattered about the place. When he awoke, he gathered them up as well as he could; but they were so intermingled, that although he knew the proper number to take, he could not rightly distinguish his own. Hence he took up some of the arrows which belonged to Death, and left some of his. This is the cause that we now and then see the hearts of the old and decrepit transfixed with the bolts of Love; and with great grief and surprise, sometimes see youth and beauty smitten with the darts of Death.

THE LION, THE TIGER, AND THE FOX.


A LION and a Tiger happened to come together over the dead body of a Fawn that had been recently shot. A fierce battle ensued, and as each animal was in the prime of his age and strength, the combat was long and furious. At last they lay stretched on the ground panting, bleeding, and exhausted, each unable to lift a paw against the other. An impudent Fox coming by at the time, stepped in and carried off before their eyes the prey on account of which they had both suffered so much.



THE LION, THE TIGER, AND THE FOX.

THE WOOD AND THE CLOWN.

A COUNTRYMAN entered a Wood and looked about him as though he were in search of something. The Trees, moved by curiosity, asked him what it was he wanted. He answered that all he wanted was a piece of good, tough ash for a handle to his axe. The Trees agreed that if that was all, he should have it. When, however, he had got it, and fitted it to his axe, he laid about him unmercifully, and the giants of the forest fell under his strokes. The Oak is said to have spoken thus to the Beech, in a low whisper: "Brother, we must take it for our pains."



THE HARPER.

A MAN who used to play upon his Harp, and sing to it, in wine-shops and other small places of entertainment, was led by the applause which his efforts met with there to desire a larger sphere in which to display his talents. He fancied if he could only be once allowed to play and sing upon the stage of the public theatre, renown and fortune must assuredly follow. He tried long and hard, and at last gained the necessary permission, but in such a vast place, his strains seemed so weak, thin, and wretched that he was unanimously hissed off the stage.

THE RIVER FISH AND THE SEA FISH.

A LARGE overgrown Pike was carried out to sea by a strong current. He gave himself great airs on account of what he considered his superior race and descent, and despised the Sea Fishes among whom he found himself. "You value yourself at a great price," said a little stranger, "but if ever it is our fate to come to the market, you will find that I am thought a good deal more of there than you."



THE HORSE AND THE STAG.

THE Horse having quarrelled with the Stag, and being unable to revenge himself upon his enemy, came to a Man and begged his help. He allowed the Man to saddle and bridle him, and together they ran down the Stag and killed him. The Horse neighed with joy, and, thanking his rider warmly, asked him now to remove his saddle and let him go. "No, no," said the Man; "you are much too useful to me as you are." The Horse thenceforward served the Man, and found that he had gratified his revenge at the cost of his liberty.





THE VAIN JACKDAW.

A JACKDAW having dressed himself in feathers which had fallen from some Peacocks, strutted about in the company of these birds, and tried to pass himself off as one of them. They soon found him out, and pulled their feathers from him so roughly, and in other ways so battered him, that when he would have rejoined his fellows, they, in their turn, would have nothing to do with him, and drove him from their society.



THE THUNNY AND THE DOLPHIN.

A THUNNY being pursued by a Dolphin, swam for safety into shallow water. Seeing the Dolphin still after him, he came further in shore, and was thrown by the waves

high and dry on the sand. The Dolphin, eager in pursuit, and unable to stop himself, was also stranded. The Thunny beholding the Dolphin in the same condition as himself, said, "Now I die with pleasure, for I see my persecutor involved in the same fate."

THE PARTRIDGE AND THE COCKS.

A CERTAIN man having taken a Partridge, cut his wings and put him into a little yard where he kept Game-Cocks. The Cocks were not at all civil to the new-comer, who at first put his treatment down to the fact of his being a stranger. When, however, he found that they frequently fought and nearly killed each other, he ceased to wonder that they did not respect him.

THE HUNTED BEAVER.

THE tail of the Beaver was once thought to be of use in medicine, and the animal was often hunted on that account. A shrewd old fellow of the race, being hard pressed by the Dogs, and knowing well why they were after him, had the resolution and the presence of mind to bite off his tail, and leave it behind him, and thus escaped with his life.

THE OAK AND THE REEDS.

A VIOLENT storm uprooted an Oak that grew on the bank of a river. The Oak drifted across the stream, and lodged among some Reeds. Wondering to find these still standing, he could not help asking them how it was they had escaped the fury of a storm which had torn him up by the roots. "We bent our heads to the blast," said they, "and it passed over us. You stood stiff and stubborn till you could stand no longer."

THE FOX AND THE TIGER.

A SKILFUL archer coming into the woods, directed his arrows so well that the beasts fled in dismay. The Tiger, however, told them not to be afraid, for he would singly engage their enemy, and drive him from their domain. He had scarcely spoken, when an arrow pierced his ribs and lodged in his side. The Fox asked him, slyly, what he thought of his opponent now. "Ah!" replied the Tiger, writhing with pain, "I find that I was mistaken in my reckoning."



ÆSOP AT PLAY.

AN Athenian once found Æsop joining merrily in the sports of some children. He ridiculed him for his want of gravity, and Æsop good-temperedly took up a bow, unstrung it, and laid it at his feet. "There, friend," said he; "that bow, if kept always strained, would lose its spring, and probably snap. Let it go free sometimes, and it will be the fitter for use when it is wanted."

THE FOX AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

A Fox having been hunted hard, and run a long chase, saw a Countryman at work in a wood, and begged him to help him to some hiding-place. The man said he might go into his cottage, which was close by. He was no sooner in, than the Huntsmen came up. "Have you seen a Fox pass this way?" said they. The Countryman said "No," but pointed at the same time towards the place where the Fox lay. The Huntsmen did not take the hint, however, and made off again at full speed. The Fox, who had seen all that took place through a chink in the wall, thereupon came out, and was walking away without a word. "Why, how now?" said the man; "haven't you the manners to thank your host before you go?" "Yes, yes," said the Fox; "if you had been as honest with your finger as you were with your tongue, I shouldn't have gone without saying good-bye."



THE FOX AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

THE ONE-EYED DOE.

A DOE that had but one eye, used to graze near the sea, so that she might keep her blind eye towards the water, while she surveyed the country and saw that no hunters came near, with the other. It happened, however, that some men in a boat saw her, and as she did not perceive their approach, they came very close, and one who had a gun, fired and shot her. In her dying agony she cried out, "Alas, hard fate! that I should receive my death-wound from the side whence I expected no ill, and be safe on that where I looked for most danger."

THE THIEF AND THE BOY.

A Boy sat weeping upon the side of a well. A Thief happening to come by just at the same time, asked him why he wept. The Boy, sighing and sobbing, showed a bit of cord, and said that a silver tankard had come off from it, and was now at the bottom of the well. The Thief pulled off his clothes and went down into the well, meaning to keep the tankard for himself. Having groped about for some time without finding it, he came up again, and found not only the Boy gone, but his own clothes also, the dissembling rogue having made off with them.

THE ASS, THE DOG, AND THE WOLF.

A LADEN Ass was jogging along, followed by his tired master, at whose heels came a hungry Dog. Their path lay across a meadow, and the man stretched himself out on the turf and went to sleep. The Ass fed on the pasture, and was in no hurry at all to move. The Dog alone, being gnawed by the pains of hunger, found the time pass heavily. "Pray, dear companion," said he to the Ass, "stoop, that I may take my dinner from the pannier." The Ass turned a deaf ear, and went on cropping away the green and tender grass. The Dog persisted, and at last the Ass replied, "Wait, can't you, till our master wakes. He will give you your usual portion, without fail." Just then a famished Wolf appeared upon the scene, and sprang at the throat of the Ass. "Help, help, dear Towzer!" cried the Ass; but the Dog would not budge. "Wait till our master wakes," said he; "he will come to your help, without fail." The words were no sooner spoken, than the Ass lay strangled upon the sod.





THE FOX AND THE APE.

UPON the decease of the Lion, the beasts of the forest assembled to choose another king. The Ape played so many grimaces, gambols, and antic tricks, that he was elected by a large majority, and the crown was placed upon his head. The Fox, envious of this distinction, seeing soon after a trap baited with a piece of meat, approached the new king, and said with mock humility, "May it please your majesty, I have found on your domain a treasure to which, if you will deign to accompany me, I will conduct you." The Ape thereupon set off with the Fox, and on arriving at the spot, laid his paw upon the meat. Snap! went the trap, and caught him by the fingers. Mad

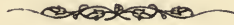
with the shame and the pain, he reproached the Fox for a false thief and a traitor. Reynard laughed heartily, and going off, said over his shoulder, with a sneer, "You a king, and not understand a trap!"

THE POWER OF FABLES.

DEMADES, a famous Greek orator, was once addressing an assembly at Athens on a subject of great importance, and in vain tried to fix the attention of his hearers. They laughed among themselves, watched the sports of the children, and in twenty other ways showed their want of concern in the subject of the discourse. Demades, after a short pause, spoke as follows: "Ceres one day journeyed in company with a Swallow and an Eel." At this there was marked attention, and every ear strained now to catch the words of the orator. "The party came to a river," continued he. "The Eel swam across, and the Swallow flew over." He then resumed the subject of his harangue. A great cry, however, arose from the people. "And Ceres? and Ceres?" cried they. "What did Ceres do?" "Why, the goddess was, and indeed she is now," replied he, "mightily offended that people should have their ears open to any sort of foolery, and shut to words of truth and wisdom."

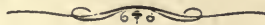
THE GOATHERD AND THE GOATS.

DURING a snowstorm in the depth of winter, a Goatherd drove his Goats for shelter to a large cavern in a rock. It happened that some Wild Goats had already taken refuge there. The Man was so struck by the size and look of these Goats, and with their superior beauty to his own, that he gave to them alone all the food he could collect. The storm lasted many days, and the Tame Goats, being entirely without food, died of starvation. As soon as the sun shone again, the strangers ran off, and made the best of their way to their native wilds. The Goatherd had to go goatless home, and was well laughed at by all for his folly.



THE DOVE AND THE ANT.

AN Ant going to a river to drink, fell in, and was carried along in the stream. A Dove pitied her condition, and threw into the river a small bough, by means of which the Ant gained the shore. The Ant afterwards, seeing a man with a fowling-piece aiming at the Dove, stung him in the foot sharply, and made him miss his aim, and so saved the Dove's life.



THE MICE IN COUNCIL.

A CERTAIN Cat that lived in a large country-house was so vigilant and active, that the Mice, finding their numbers grievously thinned, held a council, with closed doors, to consider what they had best do. Many plans had been started and dismissed, when a young Mouse, rising and catching the eye of the president, said that he had a proposal to make, that he was sure must meet with the approval of all. "If," said he, "the Cat wore around her neck a little bell, every step she took would make it tinkle; then, ever forewarned of her approach, we should have time to reach our holes. By this simple means we should live in safety, and defy her power." The speaker resumed his seat with a complacent air, and a murmur of applause arose from the audience. An old grey Mouse, with a merry twinkle in his eye, now got up, and said that the plan of the last speaker was an admirable one; but he feared it had one drawback. He had not told them who should put the bell around the Cat's neck.

THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

A MOUNTAIN from which were heard to proceed dreadful groans was said to be in labour, and people flocked near to see what would be produced. After waiting till they were quite tired, out crept a Mouse.



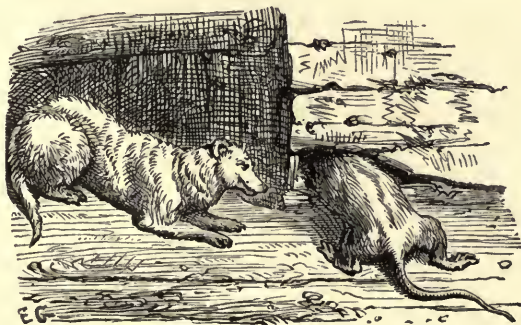
THE MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR.

THE CREAKING WHEEL.

A COACHMAN hearing one of the Wheels of his coach make a great noise, and perceiving that it was the worst one of the four, asked it how it came to take such a liberty. The Wheel answered that from the beginning of time creaking had always been the privilege of the weak.

THE MOUSE AND THE WEASEL.

A LEAN and hungry Mouse once pushed his way, not without some trouble, through a small hole into a corn-hutch, and there fed for some time so busily, that when he would have returned by the same way that he entered, he found himself too plump to get through the hole, push as hard as he might. A Weasel, who had great fun in watching the vain struggles of the fat little thing, called to him, and said, "Listen to me, my plump friend. There is but one way to get out, and that is to wait till you have become as lean as when you first got in."



THE OLD MAN AND HIS SONS.

AN Old Man had many Sons, who were always falling out with one another. He had often, but to no purpose, exhorted them to live together in harmony. One day he called them round him, and producing a bundle of sticks, bade them try each in turn to break it across. Each put forth all his strength, but the bundle resisted all their efforts. Then, cutting the cord which bound the sticks together, he told his Sons to break them separately. This was done with the greatest ease. "See, my Sons," exclaimed he, "the power of unity! Bound together by brotherly love, you may defy almost every mortal ill; divided, you will fall a prey to your enemies."

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER MAIDS.

A CERTAIN Old Woman had several Maids, whom she used to call to their work every morning at the crowing of the Cock. The Maids, finding it grievous to have their sweet sleep disturbed so early, killed the Cock, thinking when he was quiet they should enjoy their warm beds a little longer. The Old Woman, vexed at the loss of her Cock, and suspecting them to be concerned in it, from that time made them rise soon after midnight.



THE DOG IN THE MANGER.

A Dog was lying in a Manger full of hay. An Ox, being hungry, came near and was going to eat of the hay. The Dog, getting up and snarling at him, would not let him touch it. "Surly creature," said the Ox, "you cannot eat the hay yourself, and yet you will let no one else have any."

THE CAT AND THE COCK.

A CAT one day caught a Cock, and resolved to make a meal of him. He first asked him, however, what defence he had to make. "What reason can you give," said he,


“for your screaming at night so? No honest body can sleep for you.” “Nay,” answered the Cock, “I only crow in the service of man, to tell him when it is time to commence his labours.” “What nonsense you talk!” said the Cat; “you are mistaken if you think that such an excuse as that will do me out of my breakfast.”

THE HORSE AND THE ASS.

A WAR-HORSE, gaily caparisoned, with arching neck and lofty tread, the ground ringing beneath his hoofs, overtook a patient Ass, slowly walking along under a heavy load. He called upon him in a haughty tone to move on one side, and give him room to pass. The poor Ass did so, sighing at the inequality of their lots. Not long after, he met the same Horse in the same road, and near the same spot; but in how different circumstances! Wounded in battle, and his master killed, he was now lame, half blind, and heavily laden, driven with many blows by a brutal carrier, into whose hands he had fallen.

HERCULES AND THE WAGONER.

As a Wagoner was driving his wain through a miry lane, the wheels stuck fast in the clay, and the Horses could get on no further. The Man dropped on his knees, and began crying and praying to Hercules with all his might to come and help him. "Lazy fellow!" said Hercules, "get up and stir yourself. Whip your Horses stoutly, and put your shoulder to the wheel. If you want my help then, you shall have it."



THE BIRDS, THE BEASTS, AND THE BAT.

ONCE upon a time a fierce war was waged between the Birds and the Beasts. The Bat at first fought on the side of the Birds, but later on in the day the tide of battle ran so much in favour of the Beasts, that he changed over, and fought on the other side. Owing mainly, however, to the admirable conduct and courage of the Eagle, the tide once more and finally turned in favour of the Birds. The Bat, to save his life and escape the shame of falling into the hands of his deserted friends, fled, and has ever since skulked in caves and hollow trees, coming out only in the dusk, when the Birds are gone to roost.

THE GEESE AND THE CRANES.

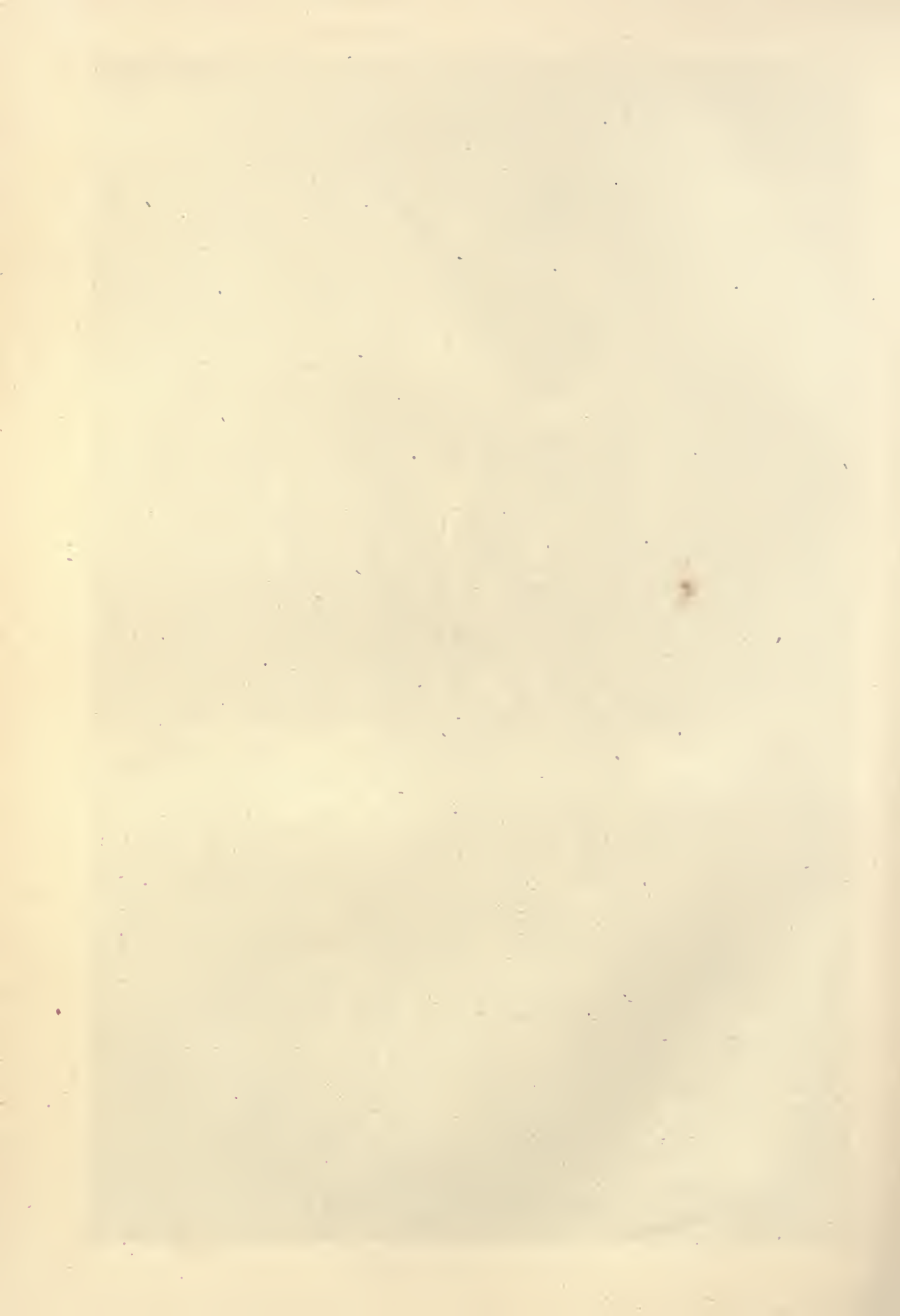
A PARTY of Geese and a party of Cranes were discovered by the farmer eating his young corn, then just appearing above the ground. The Cranes, being light of wing, flew off, and all the weight of the punishment fell upon the Geese.

THE FROGS DESIRING A KING.

THE Frogs living an easy, free sort of life among the lakes and ponds, once prayed Jupiter to send them a King. Jove being at that time in a merry mood, threw them a Log, saying, as he did so, "There, then, is a King for you." Awed by the splash, the Frogs watched their King in fear and trembling, till at last, encouraged by his stillness, one more daring than the rest jumped upon the shoulder of his monarch. Soon, many others followed his example, and made merry on the back of their unresisting King. Speedily tiring of such a torpid ruler, they again petitioned Jupiter, and asked him to send them something more like a King. This time he sent them a Stork, who tossed them about and gobbled them up without mercy. They lost no time, therefore, in beseeching the god to give them again their former state. "No, no," replied he; "a King that did you no harm did not please you. Make the best of the one you have, or you may chance to get a worse in his place."



THE FROGS DESIRING A KING.



THE TWO RABBITS.

A RABBIT, who was about to have a family, entreated another Rabbit to lend her her hutch until she was able to move about again, and assured her that she should then have it without fail. The other very readily consented, and, with a great deal of civility, resigned it to her immediately. However, when the time was up, she came and paid her a visit, and very modestly intimated that now she was up and well she hoped she might have her hutch again, for it was really inconvenient for her to be without it any longer; she must, therefore, be so free as to desire her to provide herself with other lodgings as soon as she could. The other replied that truly she was ashamed of having kept her so long out of her own house, but it was not upon her own account (for, indeed, she was well enough to go anywhere) so much as that of her young, who were yet so weak that she was afraid they would not be able to follow her; and if she would be so good as to let her stay a fortnight longer she should take it for the greatest obligation in the world. The second Rabbit was so good-natured and compassionate as to comply with this request too, but at the end of the term came and told her positively that she must turn out, for she could not possibly let her be there a day longer. "Must turn out!" says the other; "we will see about that; for I promise you, unless you can beat me and my whole litter of young, you are never likely to have anything more to do here."

THE HUSBANDMAN AND HIS SONS.

A CERTAIN Husbandman, lying at the point of death, called his Sons around him, and gave into their charge his fields and vineyards, telling them that a treasure lay hidden somewhere in them, within a foot from the ground. His Sons thought he spoke of money which he had hidden, and after he was buried, they dug most industriously all over the estate, but found nothing. The soil being so well loosened, however, the succeeding crops were of unequalled richness, and the Sons then found out what their Father had in view in telling them to dig for hidden treasure.





THE BOAR AND THE ASS.

A LITTLE scamp of an Ass meeting in a forest with a Boar, came up to him and hailed him with impudent familiarity. The Boar was about to resent the insult by ripping up the Ass's flank, but, wisely stifling his passion, he contented himself with saying, "Go, you sorry beast; I could easily and amply be revenged upon you, but I do not care to foul my tusks with the blood of so base a creature."

THE ENVIOUS MAN AND THE COVETOUS.

Two Men, one a Covetous fellow, and the other thoroughly possessed by the passion of envy, came together to proffer

their petitions to Jupiter. The god sent Apollo to deal with their requests. Apollo told them that whatsoever should be granted to the first who asked, the other should receive double. The Covetous Man forbore to speak, waiting in order that he might receive twice as much as his companion. The Envious Man, in the spitefulness of his heart, thereupon prayed that one of his own eyes might be put out, knowing that the other would have to lose both of his.

THE PORCUPINE AND THE SNAKES.

A PORCUPINE, seeking for shelter, desired some Snakes to give him admittance into their cave. They accordingly let him in, but were afterwards so annoyed by his sharp, prickly quills, that they repented of their easy compliance, and entreated him to withdraw and leave them their hole to themselves. "No," said he, "let them quit the place that don't like it; for my part, I am very well satisfied as I am."




THE MULE.

A MULE, well fed and worked but little, frisked and gambolled about in the fields, and said to himself, "What strength, what spirits are mine! My father must surely have been a thoroughbred Horse." He soon after fell into the hands of another master, and was worked hard and but scantily fed. Thoroughly jaded, he now said, "What could I have been thinking about the other day? I feel certain now that my father can only have been an Ass."

THE MOLE AND HER DAM.

THE young Mole snuffed up her nose, and told her Dam she smelt an odd kind of a smell. By-and-by, "Oh, mother," said she, "what a noise there is in my ears, as if ten thousand paper-mills were going!" And then again, soon after, "Look, look, mother! what is that I see yonder? It is just like the flame of a fiery furnace." The Dam replied, "Prithee, child, hold your idle tongue; and if you would have us allow you any sense at all, do not pretend to more than Nature has given to you."



THE FALCONER AND THE PARTRIDGE.

A PARTRIDGE, being taken in the net of a Falconer, begged hard of the Man to be set free, and promised if he were let go to decoy other Partridges into the net. "No," replied the Falconer; "I did not mean to spare you; but, if I had, your words would now have condemned you. The scoundrel who, to save himself, offers to betray his friends, deserves worse than death."

THE EAGLE AND THE FOX.

AN Eagle, looking around for something to feed her young ones with, spied a Fox's cub basking in the sun. She swooped upon him, and was about to carry him off, when the old Fox came up, and, with tears in her eyes, implored the Eagle, by the love which she, as a mother, felt for her own young, to spare this, her only child. The Eagle, whose nest was in a very high tree, made light of the Fox's prayers, and carried the cub to her brood. She was about to divide it among them, when the Fox, bent upon revenge, ran to an altar in a neighbouring field on which some country people had been sacrificing a kid, and seizing thence a flaming brand, made towards the tree, meaning to set it on fire. The Eagle, terrified at the approaching ruin of her family, was glad to give back the cub, safe and sound, to his mother.



THE EAGLE AND THE FOX.

JUPITER AND THE ASS.

A CERTAIN Ass that belonged to a gardener, was weary of carrying heavy burdens, and prayed to Jupiter to give him a new master. Jupiter granted his prayer, and gave him for a master a tile-maker, who made him carry heavier burdens than before. Again he came to Jupiter, and besought him to grant him a milder master, or at any rate, a different one. The god, laughing at his folly, thereupon made him over to a tanner. The Ass was worked harder than ever, and soon upbraided himself for his stupidity. "Now," said he, "I have a master who not only beats me living, but who will not spare my hide even when I am dead."

THE HAWK AND THE FARMER.

A HAWK pursuing a Pigeon with great eagerness, was caught in a net which had been set in a corn-field for the Crows. The Farmer, seeing the Hawk fluttering in the net, came and took him. The Hawk besought the Man to let him go, saying piteously that he had done him no harm. "And pray what harm had the poor Pigeon you followed done to you?" replied the Farmer. Without more ado he wrung off his head.

THE SWALLOW AND OTHER BIRDS.

A FARMER, sowing his fields with flax, was observed by a Swallow, who, like the rest of her tribe, had travelled a good deal, and was very clever. Among other things, she knew that of this same flax, when it grew up, nets and snares would be made, to entrap her little friends, the Birds of the country. Hence, she earnestly besought them to help her in picking up and eating the hateful seed, before it had time to spring from the ground. Food of a much nicer kind was, however, then so plentiful, and it was so pleasant to fly about and sing, thinking of nothing, that they paid no attention to her entreaties. By and by the blades of the flax appeared above the ground, and the anxiety of the Swallow was renewed. "It is not yet too late," said she; "pull it all up, blade by blade, and you may then escape the fate which is otherwise in store for you. You cannot, like me, fly to other countries when danger threatens you here." The little Birds, however, still took no notice of the Swallow, except to consider her a very troublesome person, whom silly fears had set beside herself. In the course of time the flax grew, ripened, and was gathered, spun, and made up into nets, as the Swallow had foretold. Many a little Bird thought, in dying, of the Swallow they held to be so crazy. The Swallow, in despair at their thoughtless behaviour, has since preferred the society of men to that of her feathered companions.



THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

A LARK, who had Young Ones in a field of corn which was almost ripe, was afraid lest the reapers should come before her young brood were fledged. Every day, therefore, when she flew away to look for food, she charged them to take notice of what they heard in her absence, and to tell her of it when she returned. One day when she was gone, they heard the master of the field say to his son that the corn seemed ripe enough to be cut, and tell him to go early tomorrow and desire their friends and neighbours to come and help to reap it. When the old Lark came home, the Little Ones fell quivering and chirping around her, and told her what had happened, begging her to remove them as fast as she could. The mother bade them to be easy,

"for," said she, "if he depends upon his friends and his neighbours, I am sure the corn will not be reaped to-morrow." Next day she went out again, and left the same orders as before. The owner came, and waited. The sun grew hot, but nothing was done, for not a soul came. "You see," said he to his son, "these friends of ours are not to be depended upon, so run off at once to your uncles and cousins, and say I wish them to come betimes to-morrow morning and help us to reap." This the Young Ones, in a great fright, reported also to their mother. "Do not be frightened, children," said she; "kindred and relations are not always very forward in helping one another; but keep your ears open, and let me know what you hear to-morrow." The owner came the next day, and, finding his relations as backward as his neighbours, said to his son, "Now, George, listen to me. Get a couple of good sickles ready against to-morrow morning, for it seems we must reap the corn by ourselves." The Young Ones told this to their mother. "Then, my dears," said she, "it is time for us to go indeed, for when a man undertakes to do his business himself, it is not so likely that he will be disappointed." She removed her Young Ones immediately, and the corn was reaped the next day by the old man and his son.



THE GOATHERD AND THE SHE-GOAT.

A Boy, whose business it was to look after some Goats, as night began to fall, gathered them together to lead them home. One of the number, a She-Goat, alone refused to obey his call, and stood on a ledge of a rock, nibbling the herbage that grew there. The Boy lost all patience, and taking up a great stone, threw it at the Goat with all his force. The stone struck one of the horns of the Goat, and broke it off at the middle. The Boy, terrified at what he had done and fearing his master's anger, threw himself upon his knees before the Goat, and begged her to say nothing about the mishap, alleging that it was far from his intention to aim the stone so well. "Tush!" replied the Goat. "Let my tongue be ever so silent, my horn is sure to tell the tale."



MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.

A MAN felling a tree on the bank of a river, by chance let his axe slip from his hand. It dropped into the water, and sank to the bottom. In great distress at the loss of his tool, he sat down on the bank and grieved bitterly. Mercury appeared, and asked him what was the matter. Having heard the Man's story, he dived to the bottom of the river, and bringing up a golden axe, offered it to him. The Woodman refused to take it, saying it was not his. Mercury then dived a second time, and brought up a silver one. This also the Man refused, saying that that, too, was none of his. He dived a third time, and brought up the axe that the Man had lost. This the poor Man took with great joy and thankfulness. Mercury was so pleased with his honesty, that he gave him the other two into the bargain. The Woodman told this adventure to his mates, and one of them at once set off for the river, and let his axe fall in on purpose. He then began to lament his loss with a loud voice. Mercury appeared, as before, and demanded the cause of his grief. After hearing the Man's account, he dived and brought up a golden axe, and asked him if that was his. Transported at the sight of the precious metal, the fellow eagerly answered that it was, and greedily attempted to snatch it. The god, detecting his falsehood and impudence, not only declined to give it to him, but refused to let him have his own again.



MERCURY AND THE WOODMAN.

THE LION AND THE FROG.

THE Lion hearing an odd kind of a hollow voice, and seeing nobody, started up. He listened again; the voice continued, and he shook with fear. At last seeing a Frog crawl out of the lake, and finding that the noise proceeded from that little creature, he spurned it to pieces with his feet.

THE OXEN AND THE BUTCHERS.

ONCE upon a time the Oxen took counsel together, and resolved upon ridding the land of all the Butchers, who so constantly led away the finest and fattest of their number to perish by the axe and knife. They were on the point of proceeding to carry out their plan, when a wise old Ox prayed them to reconsider their intentions. "You may be certain," said he, "that men will not go without beef. If then we kill the Butchers, who are already expert in their trade, and who put us out of pain as quickly as possible, we shall be hacked and hewed by others, who have yet to learn the business." This sensible reasoning prevailed, and the plan dropped to the ground.



THE SHEPHERD BOY AND THE WOLF.

A MISCHIEVOUS Lad, who was set to mind some Sheep, used, in jest, to cry "The Wolf! the Wolf!" When the people at work in the neighbouring fields came running to the spot, he would laugh at them for their pains. One day the Wolf came in reality, and the Boy, this time, called "The Wolf! the Wolf!" in earnest; but the men, having been so often deceived, disregarded his cries, and the Sheep were left at the mercy of the Wolf.

THE SERPENT AND THE MAN.

THE Child of a Cottager was at play in a field at the back of his Father's house, and by chance trod upon a Snake, which turned round and bit him. The Child died of the bite, and the Father, pursuing the Snake, aimed a blow at him, and cut off a piece of his tail. The Snake gained his hole, and the next day the Man came and laid at the mouth of the hole some honey, meal, and salt, and made offers of peace, thinking to entice the Snake forth and kill him. "It won't do," hissed out the Snake. "As long as I miss my tail, and you your Child, there can be no good-will between us."





THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE.

A COUNTRY MOUSE, a plain, sensible sort of fellow, was once visited by a former companion of his, who lived in a neighbouring city. The Country Mouse put before his friend some fine peas, some choice bacon, and a bit of rare old Stilton, and called upon him to eat heartily of the good cheer. The City Mouse nibbled a little here and there in a dainty manner, wondering at the pleasure his host took in such coarse and ordinary fare. In their after-dinner chat the Town Mouse said to the Country Mouse, " Really, my good friend, that you can keep in such spirits in this dismal, dead-and-alive kind of place, surprises me altogether. You see here no life, no gaiety, no society in short, but go on

and on, in a dull humdrum sort of way, from one year's end to another. Come now, with me, this very night, and see with your own eyes what a life I lead." The Country Mouse consented, and as soon as it fell dark, off they started for the city, where they arrived just as a splendid supper given by the master of the house where our town friend lived was over and the guests had departed. The City Mouse soon got together a heap of dainties on a corner of the handsome Turkey carpet. The Country Mouse, who had never even heard the names of half the meats set before him, was hesitating where he should begin, when the room-door creaked, opened, and in entered a servant with a light. The companions ran off, but everything soon being quiet again, they returned to their repast, when once more the door opened, and the son of the master of the house came in with a great bounce, followed by his little Terrier, who ran sniffing to the very spot where our friends had just been. The City Mouse was by that time safe in his hole—which, by the way, he had not been thoughtful enough to show to his friend, who could find no better shelter than that afforded by a sofa, behind which he waited in fear and trembling till quietness was again restored. The City Mouse then called upon him to resume his supper, but the Country Mouse said, "No, no; I shall be off as fast as I can. I would rather have a crust with peace and quietness, than all your fine things in the midst of such alarms and frights as these."



THE PEACOCK AND THE MAGPIE.

THE birds once met together to choose a king, and among others the Peacock was a candidate. Spreading his showy tail, and stalking up and down with affected grandeur, he caught the eyes of the silly multitude by his brilliant appearance, and was elected with acclamation. Just as they were going to proclaim him, the Magpie stepped forth into the midst of the assembly, and thus addressed the new king: "May it please your majesty elect to permit a humble admirer to propose a question. As our king, we put our lives and fortunes in your hands. If, therefore, the Eagle, the Vulture, and the Kite, our unruly brethren, should in the future, as they have in times past, make a descent upon us, what means would you take for our defence?" This pithy question opened the eyes of the birds to the weakness of their choice. They cancelled the election, and have ever since regarded the Peacock as a vain pretender, and considered the Magpie to be as good a speaker as any of their number.



THE SOW AND THE WOLF.

A Sow had just farrowed, and lay in the sty with her whole litter of pigs about her. A Wolf who longed for a little one, but knew not how to come by it, endeavoured to insinuate herself in the good opinion of the mother. "How do you find yourself to-day, Mrs. Sow?" said she. "A little fresh air would certainly do you great good. Now, do go abroad and air yourself a little, and I will with pleasure mind your young ones till you return." "Many thanks for your offer," replied the Sow. "I know very well what kind of care you would take of my little ones. If you really wished to be as obliging as you pretend to be, you would not show me your face again."

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

A HUNGRY Fox one day saw some tempting Grapes hanging at a good height from the ground. He made many attempts to reach them, but all in vain. Tired out by his failures, he walked off grumbling to himself, "Nasty sour things, I know you are, and not at all fit for a gentleman's eating."





THE FOX AND THE GRAPES.

THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE STORK.

A HUSBANDMAN set a net in his fields, to take the Cranes and Geese which came to feed upon the newly-springing corn. He took several, and with them a Stork, who pleaded hard for his life, on the ground that he was neither a Goose nor a Crane, but a poor, harmless Stork. "That may be very true," replied the Husbandman; "but as I have taken you in bad company, you must expect to suffer the same punishment."

THE THRUSH AND THE SWALLOW.

A YOUNG Thrush, who lived in an orchard, once became acquainted with a Swallow. A friendship sprang up between them, and the Swallow, after skimming the orchard and the neighbouring meadow, would every now and then come and visit the Thrush. The Thrush, hopping from branch to branch, would welcome him with his most cheerful note. "Oh, mother!" said he to his parent, one day, "never had creature such a friend as I have in this same Swallow." "Nor ever any mother," replied the parent bird, "such a silly son as I have in this same Thrush. Long before the approach of winter, your friend will have left you, and while you sit shivering on a leafless bough, he will be sporting under sunny skies hundreds of miles away."

THE FOWLER AND THE RING-DOVE.

A FOWLER, seeing a Ring-Dove among the branches of an oak, put his piece to his shoulder and aimed at the bird. Just then an Adder, on which unknowingly he had trodden, bit him in the leg. Feeling the poison spreading in his veins, he threw down his gun, and exclaimed, "Fate has justly brought destruction on me while I was contriving the death of another!"

THE LION, AND THE ASSES AND HARES.

UPON the breaking out of a war between the birds and the beasts, the Lion summoned all his subjects between the ages of sixteen and sixty, to appear in arms at a certain time and place, upon pain of his high displeasure. A number of Hares and Asses made their appearance on the field. Several of the commanders were for turning them off and discharging them, as creatures utterly unfit for service. "Do not be too hasty," said the Lion; "the Asses will do very well for trumpeters, and the Hares will make excellent letter-carriers."





THE SENSIBLE ASS.

AN Old Fellow, in time of war, was allowing his Ass to feed in a green meadow, when he was alarmed by a sudden advance of the enemy. He tried every means in his power to urge the Ass to fly, but in vain. "The enemy are upon us," said he. "And what will the enemy do?" asked the Ass. "Will they put two pairs of panniers on my back, instead of one?" "No," answered the Man, "there is no fear of that." "Why then," replied the Ass, "I'll not stir an inch. I am born to be a slave, and my greatest enemy is he who gives me most to carry."



THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

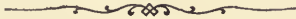
THE Wolves and the Sheep once made a treaty of peace. The Sheep were to give up their Dogs, and the Wolves their young ones, as hostages or security for its due observance. The young Wolves cried for their dams, and the Wolves thereupon alleged that the peace had been broken, and set upon the Sheep, who, deprived of their defenders the Dogs, could make no resistance.

THE YOUNG MAN AND HIS CAT.

A YOUNG MAN became so fond of his Cat, that he made her his constant companion, and used to declare that if she were a woman he would marry her. Venus at length, seeing how sincere was his affection, gratified his wishes, and changed the Cat into a young and blooming woman. They were accordingly married; but at night, hearing a Mouse in the room, the young bride sprang from the arms of her husband, caught the Mouse, and killed it. Venus, angry at this behaviour, and seeing that under the form of a woman there was still hidden the nature of a Cat, determined that form and nature should no longer disagree, and changed her back again to a Cat.

THE MAN AND THE FOXES.

A MAN whose vines and orchards had suffered greatly from the ravages of Foxes, one day caught one of these animals in a trap. In a great rage he tied up the Fox's tail with tow that had been steeped in turpentine, set a light to it, and let him run. Mad with pain and fright, the Fox ran through a large field in which, ripe for the harvest, stood corn belonging to his tormentor. The corn caught fire, and the flames, fanned by the wind, spread over the field and laid it waste. The Man lamented bitterly that he had not chosen some safer and less cruel means of revenge.



THE HART AND THE VINE.

A HART being hard pursued by the hunters, hid himself under the broad leaves of a shady, spreading Vine. When the hunters had gone by, and given him over for lost, he thought himself quite secure, and began to crop and eat the leaves of the Vine. The rustling of the branches drew the eyes of the hunters that way, and they shot their arrows there at a venture, and killed the Hart. In dying, he admitted that he deserved his fate, for his ingratitude in destroying the friend who had so kindly sheltered him in time of danger.

THE EAGLE AND THE CROW.

A CROW watched an Eagle swoop with a majestic air from a neighbouring cliff upon a flock of Sheep, and carry away a Lamb in his talons. The whole thing looked so graceful and so easy withal, that the Crow at once proceeded to imitate it, and pouncing upon the back of the largest and fattest Ram he could see, he tried to make off with it. He found not only that he could not move the Ram, but that his claws got so entangled in the animal's fleece, that he could not get away himself. He therefore became an easy prey to the Shepherd, who, coming up at the time, caught him, cut his wings, and gave him to his children for a plaything.





THE EAGLE AND THE CROW.

THE HUSBANDMAN THAT LOST HIS MATTOCK.

A HUSBANDMAN, busily employed in trenching his vineyard, laid down for awhile the Mattock he was using. When he went to take it up again, it was gone. He called together all his hired men, and asked them if they had seen the tool. They all denied any knowledge of it; and the Man, in a great rage, said he knew that one of them must have taken it, and, let it cost him what it might, he would find out the thief. With that view he insisted upon their going with him to the shrine of a famous oracle in a neighbouring city. Arrived within the city gates, they stopped at the fountain in the market-place, to bathe their feet. Just at that moment the town-crier came up, and in a loud voice announced that, the sacred shrine having been robbed last night, he was told to offer a large reward to any one who could discover the thief. Thereupon the Husbandman at once called upon his men to turn their faces homewards. "If this god," said he, "cannot tell who has robbed his temple, the chances are that he knows as little who has taken my Mattock."



THE GNAT AND THE BULL.

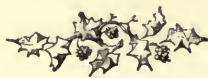
A STURDY Bull was driven by the heat of the weather to wade up to his knees in a cool and swift-running stream. He had not been long there when a Gnat, that had been disporting itself in the air, pitched upon one of his horns. "My dear fellow," said the Gnat, with as great a buzz as he could manage, "pray excuse the liberty I take. If I am too heavy, only say so, and I will go at once and rest upon the poplar which grows hard by at the edge of the stream." "Stay or go, it makes no matter to me," replied the Bull. "Had it not been for your buzz I should not even have known you were there."





THE FOWLER AND THE BLACKBIRD.

A FOWLER setting his nets in order, was curiously watched by a Blackbird, who could not forbear coming and asking the Man civilly what he was about. "I am making a nice little town for such as you," answered the Fowler, "and putting into it food and all manner of conveniencies." He then departed and hid himself. The Blackbird believing his words, came into the nets and was taken. "If this be your faith and honesty," said he to the Man, "I hope your town will have but few inhabitants."



THE TRUMPETER TAKEN PRISONER.

UPON the defeat of an army in battle, a Trumpeter was taken prisoner. The soldiers were about to put him to death, when he cried, "Nay, gentlemen, why should you kill me? This hand of mine is guiltless of a single life." "Yes," replied the soldiers; "but with that braying instrument of yours you incite others, and you must share the same fate as they."

THE ASS LADEN WITH SALT AND WITH SPONGE.

A MAN drove his Ass to the sea-side, and having purchased there a load of Salt, proceeded on his way home. In crossing a stream the Ass stumbled and fell. It was some time before he regained his feet, and by that time the Salt had all melted away, and he was delighted to find that he had lost his burden. A little while after that, the Ass, when laden with Sponges, had occasion to cross the same stream. Remembering his former good-luck, he stumbled this time on purpose, and was surprised to find that his load, so far from disappearing, became many times heavier than before.



THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

THE Hare, one day, laughing at the Tortoise for his slowness and general unwieldiness, was challenged by the latter to run a race. The Hare, looking on the whole affair as a great joke, consented, and the Fox was selected to act as umpire, and hold the stakes. The rivals started, and the Hare, of course, soon left the Tortoise far behind. Having reached midway to the goal, she began to play about, nibble the young herbage, and amuse herself in many ways. The day being warm, she even thought she would take a little nap in a shady spot, as, if the Tortoise should pass her while she slept, she could easily overtake him again before he reached the end. The Tortoise meanwhile plodded on, unwavering and unresting, straight towards the goal. The Hare, having overslept herself, started up from her nap, and was surprised to find that the Tortoise was nowhere in sight. Off she went at full speed, but on reaching the winning-post, found that the Tortoise was already there, waiting for her arrival.



THE FOX AND THE BOAR.

A BOAR stood whetting his tusks against an old tree. A Fox happened to pass by, and asked him what he meant by such warlike preparation, there being, as far as he knew, no enemy in sight. "That may be," answered the Boar; "but when the enemy is in sight it is time to think about something else."

THE SICK STAG.

A STAG, whose joints had become stiff with old age, was at great pains to get together a large heap of fodder—enough, as he thought, to last him for the remainder of his days. He stretched himself out upon it, and, now dozing, now nibbling, made up his mind to quietly wait for the end. He had always been of a gay and lively turn, and had made in his time many friends. These now came in great numbers to see him, and wish him farewell. While engaged in friendly talk over past adventures and old times, what more natural than that they should help themselves to a little of the food which seemed so plentifully stored around? The end of the matter was, that the poor Stag died not so much of sickness or of old age as for sheer want of the food which his friends had eaten for him.




THE FOX AND THE BOAR.

THE ASS EATING THISTLES.

AN Ass laden with very choice provisions, which he was carrying in harvest-time to the field, for the entertainment of his master and the reapers, stopped by the way to eat a large and strong Thistle that grew by the roadside. "Many people would wonder," said he, "that with such delicate viands within reach, I do not touch them; but to me this bitter and prickly Thistle is more savoury and relishing than anything else in the world."

THE HORSE AND THE LADEN ASS.

A FULL-FED, lazy Horse was travelling along in company with a heavily-laden Ass, belonging to the same master. The Ass, whose back was nearly breaking with his load, besought the Horse, for the sake of common kindness, to take a portion of it. The Horse, in his pride and ill-nature, refused; and the poor Ass, after staggering on a little further, fell down and died. The master thereupon laid the whole of the burden upon the Horse's back, and the skin of the Ass besides.



THE PEACH, THE APPLE, AND THE BLACKBERRY.

THERE happened a controversy once between a Peach and an Apple as to which was the fairer fruit of the two. They were so loud in their discourse, that a Blackberry from the next hedge overheard them. "Come," said the Blackberry, "we are all friends, and pray let us have no jangling among ourselves."

THE DRUNKEN HUSBAND.

A CERTAIN woman had a Drunken Husband, whom she had tried in many ways to reclaim. It was all of no use. One night when he was brought home, as usual, quite unconscious, she had him carried to a neighbouring tomb. Dressing herself in a weird costume, and with a mask upon her face, she awaited his return to his senses. Then, advancing in a solemn manner, she offered him some food, saying in a sepulchral tone, "Arise and eat. It is my office to bring food to the dead." "Ah," said he, "if you had known me better, you would have brought me something to drink instead."





THE OLD MAN AND DEATH.

A POOR and toil-worn Peasant, bent with years, and groaning beneath the weight of a heavy faggot of firewood which he carried, sought, weary and sore-footed on a long and dusty road, to gain his distant cottage. Unable to bear the weight of his burden any longer, he let it fall by the roadside, and sitting down upon it, lamented his hard fate. What pleasure had he known since first he drew breath in this sad world? From dawn to dusk one round of ill-requited toil! At home, empty cupboards, a discontented wife, and disobedient children! He called on Death to free him from his troubles. At once the King of Terrors stood before him, and asked him what he wanted. Awed

at the ghastly presence, the Old Fellow stammering said, it was nothing more than to have helped once more upon his shoulders the bundle of sticks which he had let fall.

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE DOCTOR.

AN Old Woman that had bad eyes called in a clever Doctor, who agreed for a certain sum to cure them. He was a very clever Doctor, but he was also a very great rogue; and when he called each day and bound up the Old Woman's eyes, he took advantage of her blindness to carry away with him some article of her furniture. This went on until he pronounced the Woman cured. Her room was then nearly bare. He claimed his reward, but the Old Lady protested that, so far from being cured, her sight was worse than ever. "We will soon see about that, my good Woman," said he; and she was shortly after summoned to appear in Court. "May it please your Honour," said she to the Judge, "before I called in this Doctor I could see a score of things in my room that now, when he says I am cured, I cannot see at all." This opened the eyes of the Court to the knavery of the Doctor, who was forced to give the Old Woman her property back again, and was not allowed to claim a penny of his fee.

THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A WOLF, wrapping himself in the skin of a Sheep, by that means got admission into a sheepfold, where he devoured several of the young Lambs. The Shepherd, however, soon found him out and hung him up to a tree, still in his assumed disguise. Some other Shepherds passing that way, thought it was a Sheep hanging, and cried to their friend, "What, brother! is that the way you serve Sheep in this part of the country?" "No, friends," cried he, giving at the same time the carcase a swing round, so that they might see what it was; "but it is the way to serve Wolves, even though they be dressed in Sheep's clothing."



THE MAN AND THE WEASEL.

A MAN caught a Weasel, and was about to kill it. The little animal prayed earnestly for his life. "You will not be so unkind," said he to the Man, "as to slay a poor creature who kills your Mice for you?" "For me!" answered the Man; "that's a good joke. For me, you say, as if you did not catch them more for your own pleasure than for my profit. And in respect of eating and gnawing my victuals, you know that you do as much harm as the Mice themselves. You must make some better excuse than that, before I shall feel inclined to spare you." Having said this, he strangled the Weasel without more ado.

THE COVETOUS MAN.

A MISER once buried all his money in the earth, at the foot of a tree, and went every day to feast upon the sight of his treasure. A thievish fellow, who had watched him at this occupation, came one night and carried off the gold. The next day the Miser, finding his treasure gone, tore his clothes and filled the air with his lamentations. One of his neighbours told him that if he viewed the matter aright he had lost nothing. "Go every day," said he, "and fancy your money is there, and you will be as well off as ever."



THE COVETOUS MAN.

THE HEN AND THE SWALLOW.

THERE was once a foolish Hen, that sat brooding upon a nest of Snakes' eggs. A Swallow perceiving it, flew to her, and told her what danger she was in. "Be assured," said she, "you are hatching your own destruction. The moment these young ones see the light, they will turn and wreak their venomous spite upon you."


THE BEES, THE DRONES, AND THE WASP.

A PARTY of Drones got into a hive, and laying claim to the honey and comb which they found there, tried to force the Bees to quit. The Bees, however, made a sturdy resistance, and the Drones were not unwilling to agree to their proposal that the dispute should be referred for judgment to the Wasp. The Wasp, pretending that it was a hard matter to decide, directed both parties to make and fill some comb before him in court, so that he might see whose production most resembled the property in dispute. The Bees at once set to work, but the Drones refused the trial; so the verdict was given by Judge Wasp in favour of the Bees.




THE FISHERMAN AND TROUBLED WATER.

A CERTAIN Fisherman having laid his nets in a river, took a long pole, and fell a-beating the water, to frighten the fish into his nets. One of the people who lived thereabout came and said to him, with surprise, "Why, what are you doing there, splashing and dashing the water about at that rate? You muddle the stream, and completely spoil our drink." "Well," replied the Fisherman, "all I know is, I must either spoil your drink, or have nothing to eat."



THE FROG AND THE MOUSE. .

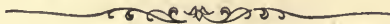
A FROG and a Mouse, who had long been rivals for the sovereignty of a certain marsh, and had many a skirmish and running fight together, agreed one day to settle the matter, once for all, by a fair and open combat. They met, and each, armed with the point of a bulrush for a spear, was ready, if need be, to fight to the death. The fight began in earnest, and there is no knowing how it might have ended, had not a Kite, seeing them from afar, pounced down and carried off both heroes in her talons.






THE ANGLER AND THE LITTLE FISH.

A FISHERMAN who had caught a very little Fish was about to throw him into his basket. The little fellow, gasping, pleaded thus for his life: "What! you are never going to keep such a little chap as I am, not one quarter grown! Fifty such as I am wouldn't make a decent dish. Do throw me back, and come and catch me again when I am bigger." "It's all very well to say 'Catch me again,' my little fellow," replied the Man, "but you know you'll make yourself very scarce for the future. You're big enough to make one in a frying-pan, so in you go."




THE HARE AND THE HOUND.

A Dog having given a long chase to a fine Hare, that showed himself to be a splendid runner, was at length forced, by want of breath, to give over the pursuit. The owner of the Dog thereupon taunted him upon his want of spirit in having allowed himself to be beaten by the Hare. "Ah, master," answered the Dog, "it's all very well for you to laugh, but we had not the same stake at hazard. He was running for his life, while I was only running for my dinner."




THE BLACKAMOOR.

A CERTAIN Man who had bought a Blackamoor, said it was all nonsense about black being the natural colour of his skin. "He has been dirty in his habits," said he, "and neglected by his former masters. Bring me some hot water, soap, and scrubbing-brushes, and a little sand, and we shall soon see what his colour is." So he scrubbed, and his servants scrubbed, till they were all tired. They made no difference in the colour of the Blackamoor; but the end of it all was, that the poor fellow caught cold and died.




THE THIEVES AND THE COCK.

SOME Thieves once broke into a house, but found nothing in it worth carrying off but a Cock. The poor Cock said as much for himself as a Cock could say, urging them to remember his services in calling people up to their work when it was time to rise. "Nay," said one of the Robbers, "you had better say nothing about that. You alarm people and keep them waking, so that it is impossible for us to rob in comfort."



THE TWO TRAVELLERS.

As two Men were travelling through a wood, one of them took up an axe which he saw lying upon the ground. "Look here," said he to his companion, "I have found an axe." "Don't say '*I* have found it,'" says the other, "but '*We* have found it.' As we are companions, we ought to share it between us." The first would not, however, consent. They had not gone far, when they heard the owner of the axe calling after them in a great passion. "We are in for it!" said he who had the axe. "Nay," answered the other, "say, '*I*'m in for it!'—not *we*. You would not let me share the prize, and I am not going to share the danger."



THE COCK AND THE FOX.

A Cock, perched among the branches of a lofty tree, crowed aloud. The shrillness of his voice echoed through the wood, and the well-known note brought a Fox, who was prowling in quest of prey, to the spot. Reynard, seeing the Cock was at a great height, set his wits to work to find some way of bringing him down. He saluted the bird in his mildest voice, and said, "Have you not heard, cousin, of the proclamation of universal peace and harmony among all kinds of beasts and birds? We are no longer to prey upon and devour one another, but love and friendship are to be the order of the day. Do come down, and we will talk over this great news at our leisure." The Cock, who knew that the Fox was only at his old tricks, pretended to be watching something in the distance, and the Fox asked him what it was he looked at so earnestly. "Why," said the Cock, "I think I see a pack of Hounds yonder." "Oh, then," said the Fox, "your humble servant; I must be gone." "Nay, cousin," said the Cock; "pray do not go: I am just coming down. You are surely not afraid of Dogs in these peaceable times!" "No, no," said the Fox; "but ten to one whether they have heard of the proclamation yet."





THE COCK AND THE FOX.

MERCURY AND THE CARVER.

MERCURY, having a mind to know how much he was esteemed among men, disguised himself, and going into a Carver's shop, where little images were sold, saw those of Jupiter, Juno, himself, and most of the other gods and goddesses. Pretending that he wanted to buy, he said to the Carver, pointing to the figure of Jupiter, "What do you ask for that?" "A shilling," answered the Man. "And what for that?" meaning Juno. "Ah," said the man, "I must have something more for that—eighteen-pence, let us say." "Well, and what, again, is the price of this?" said Mercury, laying his hand on a figure of himself, with wings, rod, and all complete. "Why," replied the man, "if you really mean business, and will buy the other two, I'll throw you that fellow into the bargain."

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE WOLF.

THE King of the Forest was once long and seriously ill, and his majesty's temper not being at all improved by the trial, the Fox, with his usual discretion, kept away from Court as much as he could. He slunk about, however, as near as he was able without being seen, and one day overheard the Wolf talking to the Lion about him. The Wolf and the Fox were never good friends, and the Wolf

was now calling the Lion's attention to the fact that the Fox had not shown his face for a long time at Court, and added that he had strong reasons for suspecting that he was busily engaged in hatching some treason or other. The Lion thereupon commanded that the Fox should be brought at once to his presence, and the Jackal was accordingly sent to look for him. The Fox, being asked what he had to say for himself, replied that his absence, so far from arising from any want of respect for his sovereign, was the result of his extreme concern for his welfare. He had gone far and wide, he said, and consulted the most skilful physicians as to what was the best thing to be done to cure the King's most grievous malady. "They say," stated he (and here he gave a malicious leer at the Wolf), "that the only thing to save your majesty's life is to wrap yourself in the warm skin torn from a newly-killed Wolf." The Lion, eager to try the experiment, at once dragged the Wolf towards him, and killed him on the spot.





THE MAN AND HIS WOODEN GOD.

A POOR Man, who longed to get rich, used to pray day and night for wealth, to a Wooden Idol which he had in his house. Notwithstanding all his prayers, instead of becoming richer, he got poorer. Out of all patience with his Idol, he one day took it by the legs, and dashed it to pieces upon the floor. Hundreds of gold pieces, which had been hidden in the body, flew about the room. Transported at the sight, he exclaimed, "How have I wasted my time in worshipping a graceless deity, who yields to force what he would not grant to prayers!"




THE APE AND HER TWO YOUNG ONES.

AN Ape who had two Young Ones was very fond of one, and took but little notice of the other. One day, finding the Dogs after her, she caught up her pet in her arms, and ran off. Blind with fright, she knocked the Little One's head against a tree, and dashed out its brains. The other Young One, who had clung by himself to his mother's rough back, escaped unharmed.

THE FOX IN THE WELL.

AN unlucky Fox having fallen into a Well, was able, by dint of great efforts, just to keep his head above water. While he was there struggling, and sticking his claws into the side of the Well, a Wolf came by and looked in. "What! my dear brother," said he, with affected concern, "can it really be you that I see down there? How cold you must feel! How long have you been in? How came you to fall in? I am so pained to see you. Do tell me all about it!" "The end of a rope would be of more use to me than all your pity," answered the Fox. "Just help me to set my foot once more on solid ground, and you shall have the whole story."



THE KNIGHT AND HIS CHARGER.

A CERTAIN Knight, in time of war, took great pains to keep his Horse well fed and cared-for, and in first-rate condition. When the war was over, the Knight's pay was reduced, and he allowed his Horse, that had carried him nobly through many a hot engagement, to be used for dragging huge logs of timber, and for hire in many other rough and disagreeable ways. Being thus hardly fed and badly treated, the animal's strength and spirit fell away. It was not long before the war was renewed, and the Knight, taking his Horse to himself again, tried, by good feeding and better treatment, to make him into a battle-steed once more. There was not time for this, however; and the Horse, as his weak legs gave way under him in a charge, said to his master, "It is too late now to repair your neglect. You have degraded me from a Horse into an Ass. It is not my fault that I can no longer bear you as before."



THE BEAR AND THE BEE-HIVES.

A BEAR that had found his way into a garden where Bees were kept, began to turn over the Hives and devour the honey. The Bees settled in swarms about his head, and stung his eyes and nose so much, that, maddened with pain, he tore the skin from his head with his own claws.

THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE EAGLE.

A HUSBANDMAN, who was out walking one fine day, met with an Eagle caught in a snare. Struck with the beauty of the bird, and being a kind-hearted fellow, he let the Eagle fly. The sun was shining fiercely, and the Man soon after sought out a cool spot in the shadow of an old wall, and sat down upon a stone. He was surprised, in a few moments, by the Eagle making a descent upon his head and carrying off his hat. The bird bore it off to some distance, and let it fall. The Man ran after his hat and picked it up, wondering why an Eagle to which he had shown so much kindness should play him such a mischievous trick in return. He turned round to go back again to his seat by the wall, and great was his astonishment and thankfulness to see, where the wall had stood, nothing but a heap of stones.



THE BEAR AND THE BEEHIVES.



THE FOX AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF who lived in a cave, having laid in a good store of provisions, kept himself very close, and set to work to enjoy them. A Fox, who missed the Wolf from his usual haunts, at last found out where he was, and, under pretence of asking after his health, came to the mouth of the cave and peeped in. He expected to be asked inside to partake, but the Wolf gruffly said that he was far too ill to see anybody. So the Fox trotted off again, in anything but a charitable state of mind. Away he went to a Shepherd, and told the Man to provide himself with a good stick and come with him, and he would show him where to find a Wolf. The Shepherd came accordingly, and killed the Wolf. The Fox thereupon took possession of the cave and its stores. He did not, however, long enjoy the fruits of his treachery, for the Man, passing by that way a few days after, looked into the cave, and seeing the Fox there, killed him too.

THE SHEPHERD TURNED MERCHANT.

A SHEPHERD that kept his Sheep at no great distance from the sea, one day drove them close to the shore, and sat down on a rock to enjoy the cool breeze. It was a beautiful summer day, and the ocean lay before him, calm,

smooth, and of an enchanting blue. As he watched the white sails, and listened to the measured plash of the tiny wavelets on the pebbled beach, his heart thrilled with pleasure. "How happy," exclaimed he, "should I be if, in a tight, trim bark of my own, with wings like a bird, I could skim that lovely plain, visit other lands, see other peoples, and become rich in ministering to their wants and pleasures!" He sold his flock, and all that he had, bought a small ship, loaded her with dates, and set sail. A storm arose: the cargo was thrown overboard to lighten the ship, but in spite of all efforts she was driven upon a rock near the shore, and went to pieces. The Shepherd narrowly escaped with his life, and was afterwards glad to earn his bread by watching the flock which had formerly been his own. In the course of time, when, by care and frugality, he had again become possessed of some amount of wealth, he happened to find himself sitting on the self-same rock, and on just such another day as that on which he had resolved to become a Merchant. "Deceitful and tempting element!" cried he to the sea; "in vain you try to engage me a second time. Others may confide their treasure to your treacherous care, but never, while I live, will I trust thy faithless bosom more."





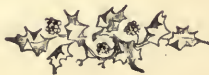
THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

A GRASSHOPPER that had merrily sung all the summer, was almost perishing with hunger in the winter. So she went to some Ants that lived near, and asked them to lend her a little of the food they had put by. "You shall certainly be paid before this time of year comes again," said she. "What did you do all the summer?" asked they. "Why, all day long, and all night long too, I sang, if you please," answered the Grasshopper. "Oh, you sang, did you?" said the Ants. "Now, then, you can dance."



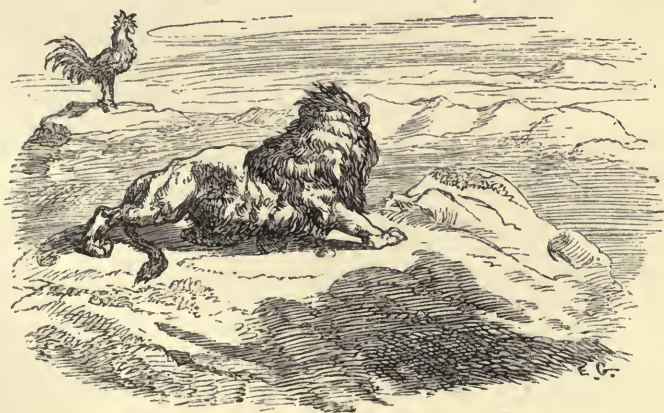
THE DOG INVITED TO SUPPER.

A CERTAIN rich man invited a person of high rank to sup with him. Extraordinary preparations were made for the repast, and all the delicacies of the season provided. The Dog of the host, having long wished to entertain another Dog, a friend of his, thought this would be a capital time to ask him to come. As soon, therefore, as it fell dusk, the invited Dog came, and was shown by his friend into the kitchen. The preparations there filled him with astonishment, and he resolved that when the time came, he would eat enough to last him a week. He wagged his tail so hard, and licked his chaps in anticipation with so much vigour, that he attracted the notice of the head cook, who, seeing a strange Dog about, caught him up by the tail, and after giving him a swing in the air, sent him flying through the open window into the street. He limped away, and was soon surrounded by a lot of Curs to whom he had boasted of his invitation. They asked him eagerly how he had fared. "Oh, rarely," answered he. "I went on to that extent, that I hardly knew which way I got out of the house."



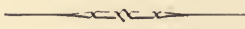
THE LION AND THE ELEPHANT.

THE Lion complained most sadly that a beast with such claws, teeth, and strength as he possessed, should yet be moved to a state of abject terror at the crowing of a Cock. "Can life be worth having," said he, "when so vile a creature has the power to rob it of its charms?" Just then, a huge Elephant came along, flapping his ears quickly to and fro, with an air of great concern. "What troubles you so?" said the Lion to the Elephant. "Can any mortal thing have power to harm a beast of your tremendous bulk and strength?" "Do you see this little buzzing Gnat?" replied the Elephant; "let him but sting the inmost recesses of my ear, and I shall go mad with pain." The Lion thereupon took heart again, and determined not to let troubles, which he shared in common with all created things, blind him to what was pleasant in life.



THE WOLVES AND THE SICK ASS.

AN Ass being sick, the report of it was spread abroad in the country, and some did not hesitate to say that she would die before the night was over. Upon this, several Wolves came to the stable where she lay, and rapping at the door, inquired how she did. The young Ass came out, and told them that her mother was much better than they desired.



THE LION AND THE GNAT.

A LIVELY and impudent Gnat was daring enough to attack a Lion, whom he so enraged by stinging the most sensitive parts of his nose, eyes, and ears, that the beast roared in anguish, and, maddened with pain, tore himself cruelly with his claws. All the attempts of the Lion to crush the Gnat were in vain, and the insect returned again and again to the charge. At last the poor beast lay exhausted and bleeding upon the ground. The Gnat, hovering over the spot, and sounding a tiny trumpet note of triumph, happened to come in the way of the delicate web of a Spider, which, slight as it was, was enough to stop him in his career. His efforts to escape only fixed him more firmly in the toils, and he who had vanquished the Lion became the prey of the Spider.



THE WOLVES AND THE SICK ASS.

JUPITER AND THE HERDSMAN.

A HERDSMAN missing a young Heifer that belonged to the herd, went up and down the forest to seek it. Not being able to find it, he prayed to Jupiter, and promised to sacrifice a Kid if he would help him to find the thief. He then went on a little further, and suddenly came upon a Lion, grumbling over the carcase of the Heifer, and feeding upon it. "Great Jupiter!" cried the Man, "I promised thee a Kid, if thou wouldst show me the thief. I now offer thee a full-grown Bull, if thou wilt mercifully deliver me safe from his clutches."

THE FIGHTING COCKS.

Two Cocks fought for the sovereignty of the dunghill. One was severely beaten, and ran and hid himself in a hole. The conqueror flew to the top of an outhouse, there clapped his wings, and crowed out "Victory!" Just then an Eagle made a stoop, trussed him, and carried him off. The other, seeing this from his hiding-place, came out and, shaking off the recollection of his late disgrace, strutted about among his Hens with all the dignity imaginable.



THE JACKDAW AND THE SHEEP.

A JACKDAW sat chattering upon the back of a Sheep. "Peace, you noisy thing!" said the Sheep. "If I were a Dog, you would not serve me so." "True," replied the Jackdaw; "I know that. I never meddle with the surly and revengeful, but I love to plague helpless creatures like you, that cannot do me any harm in return."

THE CATS AND THE MICE.

IN former times a fierce and lasting war raged between the Cats and Mice, in which, time after time, the latter had to fly. One day when the Mice in council were discussing the cause of their ill-luck, the general opinion seemed to be that it was the difficulty of knowing, in the heat of the conflict, who were their leaders, that led to their discomfiture and utter rout. It was decided that in future each chief of a division should have his head decorated with some thin straws, so that all the Mice would then know to whom they were to look for orders. So after the Mice had drilled and disciplined their numbers, they once more gave battle to the Cats. The poor fellows again met with no better success. The greater part reached their holes in safety, but the chieftains were prevented by their strange head-gear from entering their retreats, and without exception fell a prey to their ruthless pursuers.



THE SPARROW AND THE HARE.

A HARE being seized by an Eagle, cried out in a piteous manner. A Sparrow sitting on a tree close by, so far from pitying the poor animal, made merry at his expense. "Why did you stay there to be taken?" said he. "Could not so swift a creature as you are have easily escaped from an Eagle?" Just then a Hawk swooped down and carried off the Sparrow, who, when he felt the Hawk's talons in his sides, cried still more loudly than the Hare. The Hare, in the agonies of death, received comfort from the fact that the fate of the mocking Sparrow was no better than his own.



THE PLOUGHMAN AND FORTUNE.

As a Countryman was one day turning up the ground with his plough, he came across a great store of treasure. Transported with joy, he fell upon the earth and thanked her for her kindness and liberality. Fortune appeared, and said to him, "You thank the ground thus warmly, and never think of me. If, instead of finding this treasure, you had lost it, I should have been the first you would have blamed."

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE ASS.

AN Ass and a Fox were rambling through a forest one day, when they were met by a Lion. The Fox was seized with great fear, and taking the first opportunity of getting the ear of the Lion, thought to obtain his own safety at the expense of that of his companion. "Sire," said he, "yon same Ass is young and plump, and if your majesty would care to make a dinner off him, I know how he might be caught without much trouble. There is a pit-fall not far away, into which I can easily lead him." The Lion agreed, and seeing the Ass securely taken, he began his dinner by devouring the traitorous Fox, reserving the Ass to be eaten at his leisure.

THE ASS CARRYING AN IDOL.

THE master of an Ass was employed to take an Idol from the shop of the sculptor where it was made to the temple in which it was to be placed. For this purpose it was put on the back of the Ass, and carried through the principal streets of the city. Seeing that all the people, as he went along, bent themselves in lowly reverence, the animal fancied that it was to him that they were doing obeisance, and in consequence pricked up his ears, flourished his tail, and felt as proud as might be. The Idol once delivered, the man mounted his Ass and rode him home. The man was not at all pleased with the amount he had received for the job, and the poor brute, feeling the weight of his master's cudgel, and finding that the people now took not the slightest notice as he passed, saw that it was to the Idol, and not to himself, that the homage had been paid.



THE KID AND THE WOLF.

A KID, mounted upon a high rock, bestowed all manner of abuse upon a Wolf on the ground below. The Wolf, looking up, replied, "Do not think, vain creature, that you annoy me. I regard the ill language as coming not from you, but from the place upon which you stand."

THE WOLF AND THE ASS.

THE Wolves once selected one of their number to be their ruler. The Wolf that was chosen was a plausible, smooth-spoken rascal, and on a very early day he addressed an assembly of the Wolves as follows: "One thing," he said, "is of such vital importance, and will tend so much to our general welfare, that I cannot impress it too strongly upon your attention. Nothing cherishes true brotherly feeling and promotes the general good so much as the suppression of all selfishness. Let each one of you, then, share with any hungry brother who may be near whatever in hunting may fall to your lot." "Hear, hear!" cried an Ass, who listened to the speech; "and of course you yourself will begin with the fat Sheep that you hid yesterday in a corner of your lair."



THE KID AND THE WOLF.

THE WOLF AND THE SHEEP.

A WOLF that had been sorely worried, and left for dead, by the Dogs, lay not far from a running stream. Parched with thirst, the babble of the brook sounded most temptingly in his ears, and he felt that one cool, delicious draught might yet restore to him some hope of life. Just then a Sheep passed near. "Pray, sister, bring me some water from yon stream," said he. "Water is all I want; I do not ask for meat." "Yes," replied the Sheep, "I know very well that when I have brought you water, my body will serve for meat."

THE ASS'S SHADOW.

A MAN, one hot day, hired an Ass, with his Driver, to carry some merchandise across a sandy plain. The sun's rays were overpowering, and, unable to advance further without a temporary rest, he called upon the Driver to stop, and proceeded to sit down in the Shadow of the Ass. The Driver, however, a lusty fellow, rudely pushed him away, and sat down on the spot himself. "Nay, friend," said the Driver, "when you hired this Ass of me you said nothing about the Shadow. If now you want that too, you must pay for it."

THE DEER AND THE LION.

A DEER being hard pressed by the Hounds, found a cave, into which he rushed for safety. An immense Lion, couched at the farther end of the cave, sprang upon him in an instant. "Unhappy creature that I am!" exclaimed the Stag, in his dying moments. "I entered this cave to escape the pursuit of men and Dogs, and I have fallen into the jaws of the most terrible of wild beasts."

THE SHEEP AND THE DOG.

THE Sheep one day complained to the Shepherd that while they were shorn of their fleece, and their young ones often taken and killed for food, they received nothing in return but the green herbage of the earth, which grew of itself, and cost him no pains to procure. "On the other hand, your Dog," said they, "which gives no wool, and is of no use for food, is petted and fed with as good meat as his master." "Peace, bleating simpletons!" replied the Dog, who overheard them; "were it not that I look after and watch you, and keep off Wolves and thieves, small good would be to you your herbage or anything else."



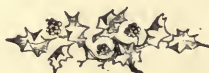
THE HORSE AND THE LION.

A LION, who had got old and infirm, saw a fine plump Nag, and longed for a bit of him. Knowing that the animal would prove too fleet for him in the chase, he had recourse to artifice. He gave out to all the beasts that, having spent many years in studying physic, he was now prepared to heal any malady or distemper with which they might be afflicted. He hoped by that means to get admittance among them, and so find a chance of gratifying his appetite. The Horse, who had doubts of the Lion's honesty, came up limping, pretending that he had run a thorn into one of his hind feet, which gave him great pain. The Lion asked that the foot might be shown to him, and pored over

it with a mock earnest air. The Horse, slyly looking round, saw that he was preparing to spring, and vigorously sending out both his heels at once, gave the Lion such a kick in the face, that it laid him stunned and sprawling upon the ground. Then laughing at the success of his trick, he trotted merrily away.

THE WOLF AND THE KID.

A WOLF spied a Kid that had strayed to a distance from the herd, and pursued him. The Kid, finding that he could not escape, waited till the Wolf came up, and then assuming a cheerful tone, said, "I see clearly enough that I must be eaten, but I would fain die as pleasantly as I could. Give me, therefore, a few notes of your pipe before I go to destruction." It seems that the Wolf was of a musical turn, and always carried his pipe with him. The Wolf played and the Kid danced, and the noise of the pipe brought the Dogs to the spot. The Wolf made off, saying, "This is what comes when people will go meddling out of their profession. My business was to play the butcher, not the piper."



THE GARDENER AND HIS DOG.

A GARDENER'S Dog, frisking about the brink of a well in the garden, happened to fall in. The Gardener very readily ran to his assistance, but as he was trying to help him out, the Cur bit him by the hand. The Man, annoyed at what he considered such ungrateful behaviour towards one whose only aim was to save his life, came away and left the Dog to drown.




THE HEN AND THE FOX.

A Fox having crept into an outhouse, looked up and down for something to eat, and at last spied a Hen sitting upon a perch so high, that he could by no means come at her. He therefore had recourse to an old stratagem. "Dear cousin," said he to her, "How do you do? I heard that you were ill, and kept at home; I could not rest, therefore, till I had come to see you. Pray let me feel your pulse. Indeed, you do not look well at all." He was running on in this impudent manner, when the Hen answered him from the roost, "Truly, dear Reynard, you are in the right. I was seldom in more danger than I am now. Pray excuse my coming down; I am sure I should catch my death if I were to." The Fox, finding himself foiled, made off, and tried his luck elsewhere.

THE MAN AND THE GNAT.

As a clownish fellow was sitting on a bank, a Gnat settled on his leg and stung it. The Man slapped his leg, meaning to kill the Gnat, but it flew away, and he had nothing but the blow for his pains. Again and again the insect alighted upon the leg, and again and again the Man struck at it, each time more savagely than before. His thigh became bruised all over, but the Gnat was still unharmed and lively. Almost mad with rage and disappointment, the fellow burst into tears. "O mighty Hercules!" cried he, "nothing can withstand thy power. Aid me, then, I beseech thee, against this terrible Gnat, which for an hour has tortured me beyond all bearing!"



THE OLD HOUND.

AN Old Hound, who had hunted well in his time, once seized a Stag, but from feebleness and the loss of his teeth was forced to let him go. The master coming up began to beat the Old Dog cruelly, but left off when the poor animal addressed him as follows: "Hold, dear master! You know well that neither my courage nor my will was at fault, but only my strength and my teeth, and these I have lost in your service."



THE OLD HOUND.

THE MOUSE AND THE FROG.

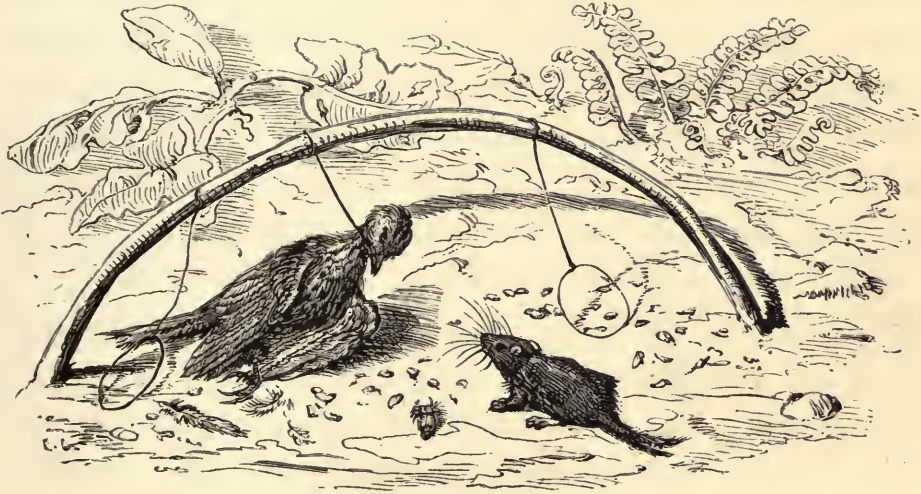
A MOUSE and a Frog had lived some time in intimacy together, and the Frog had often visited the Mouse's quarters and been welcome to a share of his store. The Frog invited the Mouse to his house in return; but as this was across the stream, the Mouse, alleging that he could not swim, had hitherto declined to go. The Frog, however, one day pressed him so much, offering at the same time to conduct him safely across, that the Mouse consented. One of the fore-feet of the Mouse was accordingly bound to one of the hind-legs of the Frog by a stout blade of grass, and the friends set off to cross the stream. When about half way across, it treacherously entered the Frog's head to try to drown the Mouse. He thought that by that means he should have undivided possession of the latter's stock of provisions. The Frog made for the bottom of the stream, but the struggles and cries of the Mouse attracted the attention of a Kite who was sailing above in the air. He descended and caught up the Mouse. The Frog, being tied to the Mouse, shared the same fate, and was justly punished for his treachery.



ÆSOP AND HIS FELLOW SERVANTS.

A MERCHANT, who was at one time Æsop's master, ordered all things to be got ready for an intended journey. When the burdens were being shared among the Servants, Æsop requested that he might have the lightest. He was told to choose for himself, and he took up the basket of bread. The other Servants laughed, for that was the largest and heaviest of all. When dinner-time came, Æsop, who had with some difficulty sustained his load, was told to distribute an equal share of bread all round. He did so, and this lightened his burden one half; and when supper-time arrived he got rid of the rest. For the remainder of the journey he had nothing but the empty basket to carry, and the other Servants, whose loads seemed to get heavier and heavier at every step, could not but applaud his ingenuity.





THE FOWLER AND THE LARK.

A LARK, caught in a snare, pleaded earnestly with the Fowler for her life. "What have I done that I must die?" said she; "I have stolen neither gold nor silver, but only a grain of corn to satisfy my hunger." The Man, without deigning any reply, twisted her neck and threw her into his sack.

THE YOUNG MAN AND THE LION.

A CERTAIN rich man, lord of a great estate, had an only son, of whom he was doatingly fond. The Young Man delighted in hunting, and went every day into the forest, in

chase of wild beasts. His father believed firmly in dreams, omens, prognostics, and the like, and dreaming one night that his son was killed by a Lion, resolved that he should not go to the forest any more. He therefore built a spacious tower, and kept the Young Man there closely confined. That his captivity might be less tedious to bear, he surrounded him with books, music, and pictures; and on the walls of the tower were painted in life-size all the beasts of the chase, and among the rest a Lion. The Young Man stood one day gazing for a long time at this picture, and, vexation at his unreasonable confinement getting the mastery over him, he struck the painted Lion a violent blow with his fist, saying, "Thou, cruel savage, art the cause of all my grief!" The point of a nail in the wainscot under the canvas entered his hand; the wound became inflamed, festered, and mortified, and the Youth died from its effects.

THE FOX AND THE ASS.

AN Ass finding a Lion's skin, put it on, and ranged about the forest. The beasts fled in terror, and he was delighted at the success of his disguise. Meeting a Fox, he rushed upon him, and this time he tried to imitate as well the roaring of the Lion. "Ah," said the Fox, "if you had held your tongue, I should have been deceived like the rest; but now you bray, I know who you are."

THE FOX AND THE COCK.

A Fox, passing early one summer's morning near a farm-yard, was caught in a trap which the farmer had planted there for that purpose. A Cock saw at a distance what had happened, and hardly daring to trust himself too near so dangerous a foe, approached him cautiously and peeped at him, not without considerable fear. Reynard saw him, and in his most bewitching manner addressed him as follows : " See, dear cousin," said he, " what an unfortunate accident has befallen me here ! and, believe me, it is all on your account. I was creeping through yonder hedge, on my way homeward, when I heard you crow, and resolved, before I went any further, to come and ask you how you did. By the way I met with this disaster. Now if you would but run to the house and bring me a pointed stick, I think I could force it into this trap and free myself from its grip. Such a service I should not soon forget." The Cock ran off and soon came back, not without the stick; which, however, was carried in the hand of the sturdy farmer, to whom he had told the story, and who lost no time in putting it out of Master Fox's power to do any harm for the future.



THE GOURD AND THE PINE.

A GOURD was planted close beside a large, well-spread Pine. The season was kindly, and the Gourd shot itself up in a short time, climbing by the boughs and twining about them, till it topped and covered the tree itself. The leaves were large, and the flowers and fruit fair, insomuch that the Gourd, comparing itself with the Pine, had the confidence to value itself above it upon the comparison. "Why," said the Gourd, "you have been more years growing to this stature than I have been days." "Well," replied the Pine, "but after the many winters and summers that I have endured, the many blasting colds and parching heats, you see me the very same thing that I was so long ago. But when you once come to the proof, the first blight or frost shall most infallibly bring down that pride of yours, and strip you of all your glory."

THE GOAT AND THE LION.

THE Lion seeing a Goat skipping about in high glee upon a steep craggy rock, called to him to come down upon the green pasture where he stood, and where he would be able to feed in much greater comfort. The Goat, who saw through the design of the Lion, replied, "Many thanks for your advice, dear Lion, but I wonder whether you are thinking most of my comfort, or how you would relish a nice morsel of Goat's flesh."



THE GOAT AND THE LION.

THE TONGUES.

XANTHUS invited a large company to dinner, and Æsop was ordered to furnish the feast with the choicest dainties that money could procure. The first course consisted of Tongues, cooked in different ways, and served with appropriate sauces. This gave rise to a deal of mirth and witty remarks among the assembled guests. The second course, however, like the first, was also nothing but Tongues, and so the third, and the fourth. The matter seemed to all to have gone beyond a jest, and Xanthus angrily demanded of Æsop, "Did I not tell you, sirrah, to provide the choicest dainties that money could procure?" "And what excels the Tongue?" replied Æsop. "It is the great channel of learning and philosophy. By this noble organ addresses and eulogies are made, and commerce, contracts, and marriages completely established. Nothing is equal to the Tongue." The company applauded Æsop's wit, and good-humour was restored. "Well," said Xanthus to the guests, "pray do me the favour of dining with me again to-morrow. And if this is your best," continued he, turning to Æsop, "pray, to-morrow let us have some of the worst meat you can find." The next day, when dinner-time came, the guests were assembled. Great was their astonishment, and great the anger of Xanthus, at finding that again nothing but Tongues was put upon the table. "How, sir," said Xanthus, "should Tongues be the best of meat one day and the worst another?" "What," replied Æsop, "can be worse than

the Tongue? What wickedness is there under the sun that it has not a part in? Treasons, violence, injustice, and fraud are debated, resolved upon, and communicated by the Tongue. It is the ruin of empires, cities; and of private friendships." The company were more than ever struck by Æsop's ingenuity, and successfully interceded for him with his master.

THE LOCUSTS AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

A Boy, hunting for Locusts, had the fortune to find a Grasshopper, who, when she was about to be killed, pleaded thus for her life: "Alas! I never did anybody an injury, and never had it either in my will or my power to do so. All my business is my song; and what will you be the better for my death?" The Boy's heart relented, and he set the simple Grasshopper at liberty.





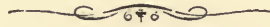
THE WOLF, THE SHE-GOAT, AND THE KID.

A SHE-GOAT, leaving her house one morning to look for food, told her Kid to bolt the door, and to open to no one who did not give as a pass-word, "A plague on the Wolf, and all his tribe." A Wolf who was hanging about, unseen by the Goat, heard her words, and when she was gone, came and tapped at the door, and imitating her voice, said, "A plague on the Wolf, and all his tribe." He made sure that the door would be opened at once; but the Kid, whose suspicions were aroused, bade him show his beard, and he should be admitted directly.



THE WOMAN AND THE FAT HEN.

A WOMAN had a Hen that laid an egg every day. The Fowl was of a superior breed, and the eggs were very fine, and sold for a good price. The Woman thought that by giving the Hen double as much food as she had been in the habit of giving, the bird might be brought to lay two eggs a day instead of one. So the quantity of food was doubled accordingly, and the Hen grew very fat, and gave over laying altogether.



THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

A MAN who gave himself out for a Wizard and Fortune-teller, used to stand in the market-place and pretend to cast nativities, give information as to missing property, and other matters of the like kind. One day, while he was busily plying his trade, a waggish fellow broke through the crowd, and gasping as if for want of breath, told him that his house was in flames, and must shortly be burnt to the ground. Off ran the Wizard at the news as fast as his legs could carry him, while the Wag and a crowd of other people followed at his heels. The house, it seems, was not on fire at all; and the Wag asked him, amid the jeers of the people, how it was that he, who was so clever at telling other people's fortunes, should know so little of his own.

THE BAT AND THE TWO WEASELS.

A WEASEL seized upon a Bat, who begged hard for his life. "No, no," said the Weasel; "I give no quarter to Birds." "Birds!" cried the Bat. "I am no Bird. I am a Mouse. Look at my body." And so she got off that time. A few days after she fell into the clutches of another Weasel, who, unlike the former, had a stronger antipathy to Mice than to Birds. The Bat cried for mercy. "No," said the Weasel; "no mercy to a Mouse." "But," said the Bat, "you can see from my wings that I am a Bird." And so she escaped that time as well.

JUPITER AND A BEE.

A BEE made Jupiter a present of a pot of honey, which was so kindly taken that he bade her ask what she would, and it should be granted her. The Bee desired that wherever she should set her sting it might be mortal. Jupiter was loth to leave mankind at the mercy of a little spiteful insect, and was annoyed at the ill-nature of her wish. He therefore said that, while for his promise sake he would give her the power to harm, she must be careful how she used the power, for where she planted her sting she would leave it, and with it lose her life.

THE RAVEN AND THE SERPENT.

A HUNGRY Raven, searching for prey, came across a Snake lying at full length on a sunny bank. He seized him in his horny beak and would have devoured him, but the Snake, twisting and turning about, bit the Raven with his venomous fangs, so that he died in great pain. In dying, he confessed that he was justly served for seeking to satisfy his appetite at the expense of another's welfare.

THE FOX AND THE CROW.


A CROW having stolen a piece of cheese from a cottage window, flew with it to a tree that was some way off. A Fox, drawn by the smell of the cheese, came and sat at the foot of the tree, and tried to find some way of making it his. "Good morning, dear Miss Crow," said he. "How well you are looking to-day! What handsome feathers yours are, to be sure! Perhaps, too, your voice is as sweet as your feathers are fine. If so, you are really the Queen of Birds." The Crow, quite beside herself to hear such praise, at once opened a wide beak to let the Fox judge of her voice, and so let fall the cheese. The Fox snapped it up, and exclaimed, "Ah! ah! my good soul, learn that all who flatter have their own ends in view. That lesson will well repay you for a bit of cheese."



THE FOX AND THE CROW.

THE ASS, THE APE, AND THE MOLE.

AN Ass and an Ape were one day grumbling together over their respective grievances. "My ears are so long that people laugh at me," said the Ass; "I wish I had horns like the Ox." "And I," said the Ape, "am really ashamed to turn my back upon any one. Why should not I have a fine bushy tail as well as that saucy fellow the Fox?" "Hold your tongues, both of you," said a Mole that overheard them, "and be thankful for what you have. The poor Moles have no horns at all, and no tail to speak of, and are nearly blind as well."



THE SEA AND THE RIVERS.

XANTHUS making merry one day with several students of philosophy, who were his companions, became intoxicated, and while in that state one of them, trying to make fun of him, said, "Xanthus, I have read somewhere that it is possible for a man to drink up the Sea. Do you believe it could be done?" "Yes, easily," said Xanthus. "I'll wager you my house and lands, and all that I have, that I can do it myself." The wager was laid, and to confirm it they exchanged their rings. The next day Xanthus, missing his ring and finding a strange one in its place, asked Æsop for an explanation. "Yesterday," replied

Æsop, "you betted your whole fortune that you would drink up the sea; and to bind the wager you exchanged your ring." Xanthus was overwhelmed with perplexity, and eagerly besought Æsop to tell him what to do. "To perform your wager," said Æsop, "you know is impossible, but I will show you how to evade it." They accordingly met the scholar, and went with him and a great number of people to the sea-shore, where Æsop had provided a table with several large glasses upon it, and men stood around with ladles with which to fill them. Xanthus, instructed by Æsop, gravely took his seat at the table. The beholders looked on with astonishment, thinking that he must surely have lost his senses. "My agreement," said he, turning to the scholar, "is to drink up the Sea. I said nothing of the Rivers and Streams that are everywhere flowing into it. Stop up these, and I will proceed to fulfil my engagement."





THE FOX AND THE LION.

THE first time the Fox saw the Lion, he nearly died with fright. The next time, he gathered sufficient courage to have a good stare. The third time, he went boldly up to the Lion, and commenced a familiar conversation with him.

THE GARDENER AND HIS LANDLORD.


A SIMPLE sort of Country Fellow, who rented a cottage and small garden on the outskirts of a park belonging to a great Squire, was much annoyed at the havoc which a certain Hare made with his choice and delicate young vegetables. So off went the Man, one morning, to complain

to the Squire. "This Hare," said he, "laughs at all snares. He has a charm which keeps off all the sticks and stones that I throw at him. In plain truth, I believe he is no Hare at all, but a wizard in disguise." "Nay, were he the father of all wizards," replied the Squire, who was a great hunter, "my Dogs will make short work with him. We'll come to-morrow, and see about it." The next morning came the Squire with his pack of Hounds, and a score of friends, huntsmen and others. The Gardener was at breakfast, and felt bound to ask them to partake. They praised the fare, which rapidly diminished, and joked so freely with the Gardener's daughter, a simple, modest girl, that her father was obliged to interfere. "Now, then, let us beat for the Hare," cried the Squire; and the huntsmen blew their horns with deafening noise, and the Dogs flew here and there in search of the Hare, who was soon started from under a big cabbage where he had gone for shelter. Across the garden ran the Hare, and after him went the Dogs. Alas for the beds, the frames, the flowers! Through the hedge went the Hare, and over the beds and through the hedge after him went the Squire, the friends, the huntsmen, horses and all. A wreck indeed did the place look, when they were gone. "Ah!" cried the Countryman, "fool that I was to go to the great for help! Here is more damage done in half an hour than all the Hares in the province would have made in a year!"



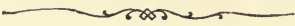
THE HORSE AND THE HOG.

A Hog that was lazily lying in the sun on a dung-heap saw a War-Horse advancing, on his way to the battle-field. The Horse was gaily caparisoned, and proudly spurned the ground, as if impatient to charge the enemy. The Hog half lifted his head and, grunting, said to him, "What a fool you are to be so ready to rush to your death!" "Your speech," replied the Horse, "fits well a vile animal, that only lives to get fat and be killed by the knife. If I die on the field, I die where duty calls me, and I shall leave the memory of a good name behind."



JUPITER'S TWO WALLETS.

WHEN Jupiter made Man, he gave him two Wallets—one for his neighbour's faults, the other for his own. He threw them over the Man's shoulder, so that one hung in front and the other behind. The Man kept the one in front for his neighbour's faults, and the one behind for his own; so that while the first was always under his nose, it took some pains to see the latter. This custom, which began thus early, is not quite unknown at the present day.



A BOAR CHALLENGES AN ASS.

SOME hard words passed between a Boar and an Ass, and a challenge followed upon them. The Boar, priding himself upon his tusks, and comparing his head with the Ass's head, looked forward to the fight with confidence. The time for the battle came. The combatants approached one another. The Boar rushed upon the Ass, who, suddenly turning round, let his hoofs fly with all his might right in the jaws of the Boar. The Boar staggered again. "Well," said he, "who could have expected an attack from that end?"

THE ASS AND THE LION HUNTING.

THE Lion once took a fancy to Hunting in company with an Ass. He sent the Ass into the forest, and told him to bray there as hard as he could. "By that means," said he, "you will rouse all the beasts in the forest. I shall stand here, and catch all that fly this way." The Ass brayed in his most hideous manner; and when the Lion was tired of slaughter, he called to him to come out of the wood. "Did I not do my part well?" asked the conceited beast. "Excellently well," replied the Lion. "Had I not known that you were nothing more than an Ass, I should have been frightened myself."



THE ASS AND THE LION HUNTING.

SOCRATES AND HIS FRIENDS.

SOCRATES once built a house, and everybody who saw it had something or other to say against it. "What a front!" said one. "What an inside!" said another. "What rooms! not big enough to turn round in," said a third. "Small as it is," answered Socrates, "I wish I had true Friends enough to fill it."

THE APE AND THE DOLPHIN.

A SHIP, wrecked off the coast of Greece, had on board a large Ape, kept for the diversion of the sailors. The ship went down, and the Ape, with most of the crew, was left struggling in the water. Dolphins are said to have a great friendship for man, and one of these fishes, taking the Ape for a man, came under him and, supporting him on his back, swam with him to the mouth of the Piræus (a harbour in Greece so called). "In what part of Greece do you live?" demanded the Dolphin. "I am an Athenian," said the Ape. "Oh, then, you know Piræus, of course?" said the Dolphin. "Know Piræus!" cried the Ape, not wishing to appear ignorant to the Dolphin; "I should rather think I did. Why, my father and he are first cousins." Thereupon the Dolphin, finding that he was supporting an impostor, slipped from beneath his legs, and left him to his fate.

THE FOX AND THE HEDGEHOG.

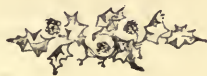
A Fox swimming across a river, was drifted along by the stream, and carried by an eddy into a nook on the opposite bank. He lay there exhausted, and unable for a time to scramble up. To add to his misfortunes a swarm of Flies settled upon his head, and stung and plagued him grievously. A Hedgehog, that happened to be near the edge of the water, offered to drive away the Flies that molested and teased him in that sad manner. "Nay," cried the Fox, "pray let them alone. Those that are now upon me are already full almost to bursting with my blood. If you drive them away, a fresh swarm of hungry rascals will take their places, and I shall not have a drop of blood left in my body."





THE CAT AND THE FOX.

THE Cat and the Fox were once talking together in the middle of a forest. "Let things be ever so bad," said Reynard, "I don't care ; I have a hundred shifts, if one should fail." "I," said the Cat, "have but one ; if that fails me I am undone." Just then a pack of Hounds burst into view. The Cat flew up a tree, and sat securely among the branches, and thence saw the Fox, after trying his hundred shifts in vain, overtaken by the Dogs and torn in pieces.



THE FOX, THE WOLF, AND THE HORSE.

A Fox seeing a Horse for the first time, grazing in a field, at once ran to a Wolf of his acquaintance, and described the animal that he had found. "It is, perhaps," said the Fox, "some delicious prey that fortune has put in our path. Come with me, and judge for yourself." Off they ran, and soon came to the Horse, who, scarcely lifting his head, seemed little anxious to be on speaking terms with such suspicious-looking characters. "Sir," said the Fox, "your humble servants here would with pleasure learn the name by which you are known to your illustrious friends." The Horse, who was not without a ready wit, said his name was there curiously written upon his hoofs for the information of those who cared to read it. "Gladly would I," replied the sly Fox, suspecting in an instant something wrong, "but my parents were poor, and could not pay for my education; hence, I never learned to read. The friends of my companion here, on the contrary, are great folk, and he can both read and write, and has a thousand other accomplishments." The Wolf, pleased with the flattery, at once went up, with a knowing air, to examine one of the hoofs which the Horse raised for his convenience; and when he had come near enough, the Horse gave a sudden and vigorous kick, and back to earth fell the Wolf, his jaw broken and bleeding. "Well, cousin," cried the Fox, with a grin, "you need never ask for the name a second time, now that you have it written so plainly just below your eyes."

THE MASTER AND HIS SCHOLAR.

As a Schoolmaster was walking upon the bank of a river, not far from his School, he heard a cry, as of some one in distress. Running to the side of the river, he saw one of his Scholars in the water, hanging by the bough of a willow. The Boy, it seems, had been learning to swim with corks, and fancying that he could now do without them, had thrown them aside. The force of the stream hurried him out of his depth, and he would certainly have been drowned, had not the friendly branch of a willow hung in his way. The Master took up the corks, which were lying upon the bank, and threw them to his Scholar. "Let this be a warning to you," said he, "and in your future life never throw away your corks until you are quite sure you have strength and experience enough to swim without them."




THE FROG AND THE FOX.

A FROG came out of his native marsh, and, hopping off to the top of a mound of earth, gave out to all the beasts around that he was a great physician, and could heal all manner of diseases. The Fox demanded why, if he was so clever, he did not mend his own blotched and spotted body, his stare eyes, and his lantern jaws.

THE MAN AND THE STONE.

ÆSOP was sent one day by his master Xanthus to see what company were at the public bath. He saw that many who came stumbled, both going in and coming out, over a large Stone that lay at the entrance to the bath, and that only one person had the good sense to remove it. He returned and told his master that there was only one Man at the bath. Xanthus accordingly went, and finding it full of people, demanded of Æsop why he had told him false. Æsop thereupon replied that only he who had removed the Stone could be considered a man, and that the rest were not worthy the name.





THE FROG AND THE FOX.

A COCK AND HORSES.

A Cock once got into a stable, and went about nestling and scratching in the straw among the Horses, who every now and then would stamp and fling out their heels. So the Cock gravely set to work to admonish them. "Pray, my good friends, let us have a care," said he, "that we don't tread on one another."

THE OWL AND THE GRASSHOPPER.

AN Owl who was sitting in a hollow tree, dozing away a long summer's afternoon, was very much disturbed by a rogue of a Grasshopper singing in the grass beneath. So far indeed from keeping quiet, or moving away at the request of the Owl, the Grasshopper sang all the more, and called her an old blinker that only showed out at nights when all honest people were gone to bed. The Owl waited in silence for a short time, and then artfully addressed the Grasshopper as follows: "Well, my dear, if one cannot be allowed to sleep, it is something to be kept awake by such a pleasant little pipe as yours, which makes most agreeable music, I must say. And now I think of it, my mistress Pallas gave me the other day a bottle of delicious nectar. If you will take the trouble to come up, you shall have a drop, and it will clear your voice nicely." The silly Grasshopper, beside himself with the flattery, came hopping up to the Owl. When he came within reach, the Owl caught him, killed him, and finished her nap in comfort.

THE DOG AND THE SHEEP.

THE Dog sued the Sheep for a debt; the Kite and the Wolf were the judges, and the Fox and the Vulture gave evidence. Judgment was given in favour of the plaintiff, and debt, costs, and expenses of witnesses were all paid out of the body of the poor Sheep.

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE EMPTY CASK.

AN Old Woman found an Empty Cask from which some choice old wine had lately been drawn off. She applied her nose to the bung-hole, and sniffed long and eagerly. "Oh, how good must this wine have been!" she exclaimed, "when the very dregs are so delicious."





THE SATYR AND THE TRAVELLER.

A SATYR, ranging in the forest in winter, came across a Traveller half starved with the cold. He took pity on him and invited him to go to his cave. On their way the Man kept blowing upon his fingers. "Why do you do that?" said the Satyr, who had seen little of the world. "To warm my hands, they are nearly frozen," replied the Man. Arrived at the cave, the Satyr poured out a mess of smoking pottage and laid it before the Traveller, who at once commenced blowing at it with all his might. "What, blowing again!" cried the Satyr. "Is it not hot enough?" "Yes, faith," answered the Man, "it is hot enough in all conscience, and that is just the reason why I blow at it." "Be off


with you!" said the Satyr, in alarm; "I will have no part with a man who can blow hot and cold from the same mouth."

JUPITER AND THE ANIMALS.

JUPITER one day, being in great good-humour, called upon all living things to come before him, and if, looking at themselves and at one another, there should be in the appearance of any one of them anything which admitted of improvement, they were to speak of it without fear. "Come, Master Ape," said he, "you shall speak first. Look around you, and then say, are you satisfied with your good looks?" "I should think so," answered the Ape; "and have I not reason? If I were like my brother the Bear, now, I might have something to say." "Nay," growled the Bear, "I don't see that there's much to find fault with in me; but if you could manage to lengthen the tail and trim the ears of our friend the Elephant, that might be an improvement." The Elephant, in his turn, said that he had always considered the Whale a great deal too big to be comely. The Ant thought the Mite so small as to be beneath notice. Jupiter became angry to witness so much conceit, and sent them all about their business.

THE YOUNG MEN AND THE COOK.

Two Young Men went into a Cook's shop, under pretence of buying meat. While the Cook's back was turned, one of them snatched up a piece of beef, and gave it to his companion, who put it under his cloak. The Cook turning round again, missed the meat, and charged them with the theft. "I haven't got it," said he who had taken it. "I've taken none of your meat," said he that had it. "Look here," said the Cook, "which of you has stolen my meat, I can't say ; but of this I'm sure—between you both there's a thief and a couple of rascals."



TRAVELLERS BY THE SEA-SIDE.

A PARTY of Travellers, who were journeying along by the side of the Sea, saw in the offing something that in the hazy atmosphere loomed large like a vessel. She appeared to be drifting towards the shore, and they determined to wait until she should be stranded. After some time, when the object had come nearer in shore, they fancied that it looked more like a boat than a ship. They waited some time longer, and at last found, to their disappointment, that what they had at first taken for an abandoned vessel, and then for a boat, was nothing but a floating mass of planks and sea-weed.

THE MULE LADEN WITH CORN, AND THE MULE LADEN WITH GOLD.

Two Mules were being driven along a lonely road. One was laden with Corn, and the other with Gold. The one that carried the Gold was so proud of his burden that, although it was very heavy, he would not for the world have the least bit of it taken away. He trotted along with stately step, his bells jingling as he went. By-and-by, some Robbers fell upon them. They let the Mule that carried the Corn go free; but they seized the Gold which the other carried, and, as he kicked and struggled to prevent their robbing him, they stabbed him to the heart. In dying, he said to the other Mule, "I see, brother, it is not always well to have grand duties to perform. If, like you, I had only served a Miller, this sad state would not now be mine."

THE WOLF AND THE MASTIFF.

A WOLF, who was almost skin and bone—so well did the dogs of the neighbourhood keep guard—met, one moonshiny night, a sleek Mastiff, who was, moreover, as strong as he was fat. The Wolf would gladly have supped off him, but saw there would first be a great fight, for which, in his condition, he was not prepared; so, bidding the Dog good-night very humbly, he praised



THE WOLF AND THE MASTIFF.

his good looks. "It would be easy for you," replied the Mastiff, "to get as fat as I am, if you liked. Quit this forest, where you and your fellows live so wretchedly, and often die with hunger. Follow me, and you shall fare much better." "What shall I have to do?" asked the Wolf. "Almost nothing," answered the Dog; "only chase away the beggars, and fawn upon the folks of the house. You will, in return, be paid with all sorts of nice things—bones of fowls and pigeons—to say nothing of many a friendly pat on the head." The Wolf, at the picture of so much comfort, nearly shed tears of joy. They trotted off together, but, as they went along, the Wolf noticed a bare spot on the Dog's neck. "What is that mark?" said he. "Oh, nothing," said the Dog. "How nothing?" urged the Wolf. "Oh, the merest trifle," answered the Dog; "the collar which I wear when I am tied up is the cause of it." "Tied up!" exclaimed the Wolf, with a sudden stop; "tied up! Can you not always, then, run where you please?" "Well, not quite always," said the Mastiff; "but what can that matter?" "It matters so much to me," rejoined the Wolf, "that your lot shall not be mine at any price;" and leaping away, he ran once more to his native forest.



THE TWO TRAVELLERS AND THE OYSTER.

As two Men were walking by the sea-side at low water, they saw an Oyster, and they both stooped at the same time to pick it up. One pushed the other away, and a dispute ensued. A third Traveller coming along at the time, they determined to refer the matter to him, which of the two had the better right to the Oyster. While they were each telling his story, the Arbitrator gravely took out his knife, opened the shell, and loosened the Oyster. When they had finished, and were listening for his decision, he just as gravely swallowed the Oyster, and offered them each a Shell. "The Court," said he, "awards you each a Shell. The Oyster will cover the costs."





THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.

AN Ass finding the skin of a Lion, put it on, and in that disguise spread terror through all the neighbourhood round. His master, however, spying his long ears, and recognising his voice, took a stout cudgel, and soon made him sensible that he was no more than an Ass.



THE YOUNG MOUSE, THE COCK, AND THE CAT.

A YOUNG MOUSE, on his return to his hole after leaving it for the first time, thus recounted his adventures to his mother: "Mother," said he, "quitting this narrow place where you have brought me up, I rambled about to-day like a Young Mouse of spirit, who wished to see and to be seen, when two such notable creatures came in my way! One was so gracious, so gentle and benign! the other, who was just as noisy and forbidding, had on his head and under his chin, pieces of raw meat, which shook at every step he took; and then, all at once, beating his sides with the utmost fury, he uttered such a harsh and piercing cry that I fled in terror; and this, too, just as I was about to introduce myself to the other stranger, who was covered with fur like our own, only richer-looking and much more beautiful, and who seemed so modest and benevolent that it did my heart good to look at her." "Ah, my son," replied the Old Mouse, "learn while you live to distrust appearances. The first strange creature was nothing but a Fowl, that will ere long be killed, and off his bones, when put on a dish in the pantry, we may make a delicious supper; while the other was a nasty, sly, and bloodthirsty hypocrite of a Cat, to whom no food is so welcome as a young and juicy little Mouse like yourself."



THE MAID AND THE PAIL OF MILK.

DOLLY, the Milkmaid, having been a good girl for a long time, and careful in her work, her mistress gave her a Pail of New Milk for herself. With the Pail on her head, she was tripping gaily along to the house of the doctor, who was going to give a large party, and wanted the Milk for a junket. "For this Milk I shall get a shilling," said Dolly, "and with that shilling I shall buy twenty of the eggs laid by our neighbour's fine fowls. These eggs I shall put under mistress's old hen, and if only half of the chicks grow up and thrive before the next fair time comes round, I shall be able to sell them for a good guinea. Then I shall buy that jacket I saw in the village the other day, and a hat and ribbons too, and when I go to the fair how smart I shall be! Robin will be there, for certain, and he will come up and offer to be friends again. I won't come round so easily, though; and when he tries to kiss me, I shall just toss up my head and——" Here Dolly gave her head the toss she was thinking about. Down came the Pail, and the Milk ran out on the ground! Good-bye now to eggs, chicken, jacket, hat, ribbons, and all!



THE THIEF AND THE DOG.

A THIEF who came near a house one night to rob it, was very much annoyed at finding a stout Dog in the courtyard, who kept up a loud and steady bark. To quiet him he threw him a tempting piece of meat, whereupon the Dog exclaimed, "When first you came, I fancied you might be a Thief: now that you try to bribe me from my duty, I am sure you are one; and I shan't leave off barking while you remain about the premises."

HERCULES AND PALLAS.

HERCULES once journeying along a narrow roadway, came across a strange-looking animal, that reared its head and threatened him. Nothing daunted, the hero gave him a few lusty blows with his club, and thought to have gone on his way. The monster however, much to the astonishment of Hercules, was now three times as big as it was before, and of a still more threatening aspect. He thereupon redoubled his blows and laid about him fast and furiously; but the harder and quicker the strokes of the club, the bigger and more frightful grew the monster, and now completely filled up the road. Pallas then appeared upon the scene. "Stop, Hercules," said she. "Cease your blows. The monster's name is *Strife*. Let it alone, and it will soon become as little as it was at first."



THE THIEF AND THE DOG.

THE TAIL OF THE SERPENT.

THE Tail of a Serpent once rebelled against the Head, and said that it was a great shame that one end of any animal should always have its way, and drag the other after it, whether it was willing or no. It was in vain that the Head urged that the Tail had neither brains nor eyes, and that it was in no way made to lead. Wearied by the Tail's importunity, the Head one day let him have his will. The Serpent now went backwards for a long time, quite gaily, until he came to the edge of a high cliff, over which both Head and Tail went flying, and came with a heavy thump on the shore beneath. The Head was never again troubled by the Tail with a word about leading.

THE FALCON AND THE CAPON.

A CAPON who had strong reasons for thinking that the time of his sacrifice was near at hand, carefully avoided coming into close quarters with any of the farm servants or domestics of the estate on which he lived. A glimpse that he had once caught of the kitchen, with its blazing fire, and the head cook, like an executioner, with a formidable knife, chopping off the heads of some of his companions, had been sufficient to keep him ever after in dread. Hence, one day when he was wanted for roasting, all the calling, clucking, and coaxing of the cook's assistants were in vain.

"How deaf and dull you must be," said a Falcon to the Capon, "not to hear when you are called, or to see when you are wanted! You should take pattern by me. I never let my master call me twice." "Ah," answered the Capon, "if Falcons were called, like Capons, to be run upon a spit and set before the kitchen fire, they would be just as slow to come, and just as hard of hearing, as I am now."

THE HARE AFRAID OF HIS EARS.

THE Lion being once badly hurt by the horns of a Goat, went into a great rage, and swore that every animal with horns should be banished from his kingdom. Goats, Bulls, Rams, Deer, and every living thing with horns had quickly to be off on pain of death. A Hare, seeing from his shadow how long his ears were, was in great fear lest they should be taken for horns. "Good-bye, my friend," said he to a Cricket who, for many a long summer evening, had chirped to him where he lay dozing: "I must be off from here. My ears are too much like horns to allow me to be comfortable." "Horns!" exclaimed the Cricket, "do you take me for a fool? You no more have horns than I have." "Say what you please," replied the Hare, "were my ears only half as long as they are, they would be quite long enough for any one to lay hold of who wished to make them out to be horns."





THE CROW AND THE PITCHER.

A CROW, ready to die with thirst, flew with joy to a Pitcher hoping to find some water in it. He found some there, to be sure, but only a little drop at the bottom, which he was quite unable to reach. He then tried to overturn the Pitcher, but it was too heavy. So he gathered up some pebbles, with which the ground near was covered, and, taking them one by one in his beak, dropped them into the Pitcher. By this means the water gradually reached the top, and he was able to drink at his ease.



THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

SAID the Fox to the Wolf, one day, "My friend, you have no idea how badly I often fare. A horribly tough old Cock, or a lean and shrivelled Hen, is a kind of food of which it is quite possible in time to get tired. Now, it seems to me that you live a good deal better than we do, and don't run into so much danger either. I have to go prowling about the houses: you get your prey in the fields afar. Teach me your business. Let me be the first of my race to have a fat Sheep whenever he has a fancy that way. Teach me, there's a good fellow, and you shall find yourself no loser in the end." "I will," said the Wolf; "and, by-the-by, I have just lost a brother. You will find his body over yonder. Slip into his skin, and come to me again." The Fox did as he was told, and the Wolf gave him many a lesson in growling, biting, fighting, and deportment, which the Fox executed first badly, then fairly, and in the end quite as well as his master. Just then a flock of Sheep came in sight, and into the midst of them rushed the new-made Wolf, with such fury and noise that Shepherd Boy, Dog, and Sheep flew off in terror to gain their home, leaving only one poor sheep behind, that had been seized by the throat. Just at that instant, a Cock in the nearest farm crowed loud and shrill. There was no resisting the familiar sound. Out of the Wolf's skin slipped the Fox, and made towards the Cock as fast as he could, forgetting in

a moment, his lessons, the Sheep, the Professor, and everything else, about which he had just been making all the fuss in the world.

THE EAGLE AND THE MAN.

A MAN caught an Eagle in a snare. He cut his wings close, and kept him chained to a stump in his yard. A kind-hearted Fowler, seeing the melancholy-looking bird, took pity on him, and bought him. He was now well treated, and his wings were allowed to grow. When they had grown again sufficiently for him to fly, the Fowler gave him his liberty. The first thing the Bird caught was a fine fat Hare, which he brought and gratefully laid at the feet of his benefactor. A Fox, looking on, said that he would have done better to try to make friends with the first Man who had caught him, and who might perhaps catch him yet again, rather than with the second, from whom he had nothing to fear. "Your advice may do very well for a Fox," replied the Eagle; "but it is my nature to serve those who have been kind to me, and to let those who choose be governed by fear."



THE CROW AND THE MUSSEL.

A CROW having found a Mussel on the sea-shore, took it in his beak, and tried for a long time to break the shell by hammering it upon a stone. Another Crow—a sly old fellow—came and watched him for some time in silence. “Friend,” said he at last, “you’ll never break it in that way. Listen to me. This is the way to do it: Fly up as high as you can, and let the tiresome thing fall upon a rock. It will be smashed then, sure enough, and you can eat it at your leisure.” The simple-minded and unsuspecting Crow did as he was told, flew up and let the Mussel fall. Before he could descend to eat it, however, the other bird had pounced upon it and carried it away.

THE LION AND THE FOUR BULLS.

FOUR Bulls were such great friends that they used always when feeding to keep together. A Lion watched them for many days with longing eyes, but never being able to find one apart from the rest, was afraid to attack them. He at length succeeded in awakening a jealousy among them, which ripened into a mutual aversion, and they strayed off at a considerable distance from each other. The Lion then fell upon them singly, and killed them all.



THE LION AND THE FOUR BULLS.

THE BEAR AND THE FOX.

THE Bear is said to be unwilling to touch the dead body of a man; and one of the animals was once heard making a virtue of this peculiarity. "Such is my regard for mankind," said he, "that nothing on earth would induce me to injure a human corpse." "Your kindness would impress me much more," said a Fox who was listening to this speech, "if I could believe that you paid the same respect to the living that you profess to do to the dead."

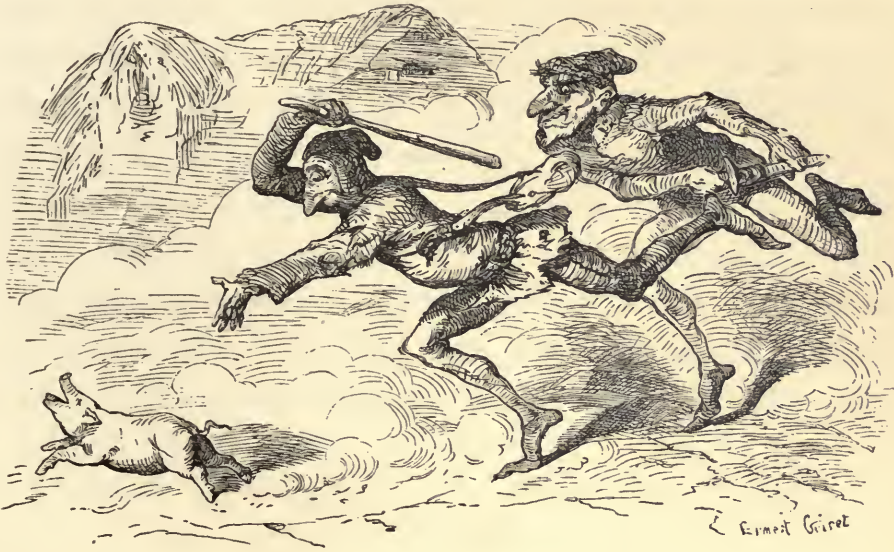
THE SHEPHERD AND THE YOUNG WOLF.

A SHEPHERD found the young Cub of a Wolf, and caused it to be brought up among his Dogs, with whom it grew to be quite friendly. When any other Wolves came, meaning to rob the fold, this young fellow was among the foremost to give them chase, but on returning he generally managed to linger behind the Dogs, and keep a sharp lookout for any stray Sheep from the fold. Instead, however, of bringing these home, he would drive them to an out-of-the-way spot, and there mangle and partially devour them. He did this once too often, and was caught at it by the Shepherd, who quickly set him hanging by the neck from the bough of a tree, and in that way put an end to his double-dealing.

THE EAGLE AND THE OWL.

THE Eagle and the Owl, after many quarrels, swore that they would be fast friends for ever, and that they would never harm each other's young ones. "But do you know my little ones?" said the Owl. "If you do not, I fear it will go hard with them when you find them." "Nay, then, I do not," replied the Eagle. "The greater your loss," said the Owl; "they are the sweetest, prettiest things in the world. Such dear eyes! such charming plumage! such winning little ways! You'll know them, now, from my description." A short time after, the Eagle found the little ones in a hollow tree. "These hideous little staring frights, at any rate, cannot be neighbour Owl's delicious pets," said the Eagle; "so I may make away with them without the least misgiving." The Owl, finding her young ones gone, loaded the Eagle with reproaches. "Nay," answered the Eagle, "blame yourself rather than me. If you paint with such flattering colours, it is not my fault if I do not recognise your portraits."






THE MERRY-ANDREW AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

ON the occasion of some festivities that were given by a Roman nobleman, a droll fellow of a Merry-andrew caused much laughter by his tricks upon the stage, and, more than all, by his imitation of the squeaking of a Pig. It seemed to the hearers so real, that they called for it again and again. One man, however, in the audience, thought the imitation was not perfect; and he made his way to the stage, and said that if he were permitted, he to-morrow would enter the lists, and squeak against the Merry-andrew for a wager. The mob, anticipating great fun, shouted their consent, and accordingly, when the next day came, the two rival Jokers were in their place. The hero of the previous day went first, and the hearers, more pleased than ever,

fairly roared with delight. Then came the turn of the Countryman, who, having a Pig carefully concealed under his cloak, so that no one would have suspected its existence, vigorously pinched its ear with his thumb-nail, and made it squeak with a vengeance. "Not half as good—not half as good!" cried the audience, and many among them even began to hiss. "Fine judges you!" replied the Countryman, rushing to the front of the stage, drawing the Pig from under his cloak, and holding the animal up on high. "Behold the performer that you condemn!"

THE HARE AND THE DOG.

A DOG once gave a long chase to a Hare. The Dog having not long since made a good meal, was not at all hungry, and in consequence in no hurry to put an end to the sport. He would at times, as they ran, snap at the Hare, and at others lick him with his tongue. "Pray," cried the persecuted and bewildered Hare, "are you a friend or an enemy? If a friend, why do you bite me so? and if an enemy, why caress me?"





THE OLD MAN, HIS SON, AND THE ASS.

AN Old Man and his little Boy were once driving an Ass before them to the next market-town, where it was to be sold. "Have you no more wit," said a passer-by, "than for you and your Son to trudge on foot, and let your Ass go light?" So the Man put his Boy on the Ass, and they went on again. "You lazy young rascal!" said the next person they met; "are you not ashamed to ride, and let your poor old Father go on foot?" The Man lifted off the Boy, and got up himself. Two women passed soon after, and one said to the other, "Look at that selfish old fellow, riding on, while his little Son follows after on foot!" The Old Man thereupon took up the Boy behind him. The next traveller they met asked the Old Man

whether or not the Ass was his own. Being answered that it was: "No one would think so," said he, "from the way in which you use it. Why, you are better able to carry the poor animal than he is to carry both of you." So the Old Man tied the Ass's legs to a long pole, and he and his Son shouldered the pole, and staggered along under the weight. In that fashion they entered the town, and their appearance caused so much laughter, that the Old Man, mad with vexation at the result of his endeavours to give satisfaction to everybody, threw the Ass into the river, and seizing his Son by the arm, went his way home again.

THE OLD LION.

A LION, worn-out with age, lay drawing his last breath, and several of the beasts who had formerly been sufferers by him came and revenged themselves. The Boar, with his powerful tusks, ripped his flank; and the Bull gored his sides with his horns. The Ass, too, seeing there was no danger, came up and threw his heels into the Lion's face. Thereupon, the poor old expiring tyrant, with his dying groan, uttered these words: "How much worse than a thousand deaths it is to be spurned by so base a creature.






THE OLD LION.

THE CAT AND THE SPARROWS.

A GREAT friendship existed between a Sparrow and a Cat, to whom, when quite a kitten, the bird had been given. The Sparrow would fly into little mimic rages, and peck the Cat with his bill, while Pussy would beat him off with only half-opened claws ; and though this sport would often wax warm, there was never real anger between them. It happened, however, that the bird made the acquaintance of another Sparrow, and being both of them saucy fellows, they soon fell out and quarrelled in earnest. The little friend of the Cat, in these fights, generally fared the worst ; and one day he came trembling all over with passion, and besought the Cat to avenge his wrongs for him. Pussy thereupon pounced on the offending stranger, and speedily crunched him up and swallowed him. "I had no idea before that Sparrows were so nice," said the Cat to herself, whose blood was now stirred ; and as quick as thought her little playmate was seized and sent to join his enemy.



TWO TRAVELLERS OF DIFFERING HUMOURS.

THERE were two Men together upon a journey, of very different humours. One went despondingly on, with a thousand cares and troubles in his head, exclaiming every now and then, "Whatever shall I do to live!" The other

jogged merrily along, determined to keep a good heart, to do his best, and leave the issue to Fortune. "How can you be so merry?" said the Sorrowful wight. "As I am a sinner, my heart is ready to break, for fear I should want bread." And then, shortly after, said he, "What a dreadful thing it would be if I were struck blind!" and he must needs walk on ahead with his eyes shut, to try how it would seem if that misfortune should befall him. His Fellow-traveller, coming after him, picked up a purse of gold which he, having his eyes shut, had not perceived; and thus was he punished for his mistrust, for the purse had been his if he had not first willingly put it out of his power to see it.



THE FIR-TREE AND THE BRAMBLE.

THE Fir-tree treated with contempt the Bramble that grew at its foot. "I am put to many high and noble uses," said he boastfully. "I furnish taper spars for ships, and beams for the roofs of palaces. You are trodden under foot, and despised by everybody." "You talk very finely now," replied the Bramble; "but, for all that, when once you feel the axe applied to your root, you'll wish you had been a Bramble."





THE FIR-TREE AND THE BRAMBLE.

THE HORSE AND THE GROOM.

A DISHONEST Groom used regularly to sell a good half of the measure of oats that was daily allowed for a Horse, the care of which was entrusted to him. He would, however, keep currying the animal for hours together, to make him appear in good condition. The Horse naturally resented this treatment. "If you really wish me to look sleek," said he, "in future give me half the currying, and leave off selling half my food."

THE WOLF AND THE LION.

A WOLF and a Lion were abroad on an adventure together. "Hark! sir," said the Wolf, "don't you hear the bleating of Sheep? My life for yours but I'll go and bring you something worth while." Off he ran towards the place whence the bleating came, till he arrived near enough to see the Shepherds and Dogs all alert and on their guard. Back he came sneaking to the Lion again. "Well?" said the Lion, with a contemptuous glance. "Why," answered the Wolf, "they are Sheep yonder, it is true, but they are lank as Hounds. We may as well wait till they have some more flesh on their bones."

THE EAGLE AND THE ARROW.

AN Archer once feathered an Arrow with a feather that had fallen from an Eagle's wing. It shortly afterwards happened that with this Arrow he shot the very Eagle that had cast the feather. In her mortal agony the Eagle recognised her property, and exclaimed, "Bitter is it to die, but doubly bitter to find that I have helped to speed the means of death!"



THE NURSE AND THE WOLF.

As a Wolf was hunting up and down for his supper, he passed by the door of a house where a little child was crying loudly. "Hold your tongue," said the Nurse to the child, "or I'll throw you to the Wolf." The Wolf, hearing this, waited near the house, expecting that she would keep her word. The Nurse, however, when the child was quiet, changed her tone, and said, "If the naughty Wolf comes now we'll beat his brains out for him." The Wolf thought it was then high time to be off, and went away grumbling at his folly in putting faith in the words of a woman.





THE NURSE AND THE WOLF.

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE CROW.

SOME Travellers setting out on a journey had not proceeded far, when a one-eyed Crow flew across their path. This they took for a bad omen, and it was proposed that they should give up their plan for that day, at least, and turn back again. "What nonsense!" said one of the Travellers, who was of a mocking and merry disposition. "If this Crow could foresee what is to happen to us, he would be equally knowing on his own account; and in that case, do you think he would have been silly enough to go where his eye was to be knocked out of his head?"

HERCULES AND PLUTUS.

WHEN Hercules was raised to the dignity of a god, and took his place on Olympus, he went round and paid his respects to all the gods and goddesses, excepting only the God of Wealth, to whom he made no sign. This caused much astonishment, and Jupiter, at the first favourable opportunity, asked Hercules for an explanation. "Why," answered he, "I have seen that god in the company of such rascals when on earth, that I did not know whether it would be considered reputable to be seen talking to him in heaven."

THE ANT AND THE CHRYSALIS.

AN Ant nimbly running about in the sunshine in search of food, came across a Chrysalis that was very near its time of change. The Chrysalis moved its tail, and thus attracted the attention of the Ant, who then saw for the first time that it was alive. "Poor, pitiable animal!" cried the Ant disdainfully; "what a sad fate is yours! While I can run hither and thither, at my pleasure, and, if I wish, ascend the tallest tree, you lie imprisoned here in your shell, with power only to move a joint or two of your scaly tail." The Chrysalis heard all this, but did not try to make any reply. A few days after, when the Ant passed that way again, nothing but the shell remained. Wondering what had become of its contents, he felt himself suddenly shaded and fanned by the gorgeous wings of a beautiful Butterfly. "Behold in me," said the Butterfly, "your much-pitied friend! Boast now of your powers to run and climb as long as you can get me to listen." So saying, the Butterfly rose in the air, and, borne along and aloft on the summer breeze, was soon lost to the sight of the Ant for ever.



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